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CONTENTS

COMMENTS	Page 193
INDEFINITELY POSTPONED?	195
THE NEW PATTERN OF THE RUHR. By Peter De Mendelssohn	196
"MY RICE FOR A LOAN." By Woodrow Wyatt, M.P.	196
A LONDON DIARY. By Critic	197
PLANS FOR PAWNEES. By Sagittarius	198
THIS ENGLAND	198
WRONG FRIENDS AGAIN! By Jon Kimche	198
BLOOMSBURY: 1949. By Norman MacKenzie	199
DEMOCRATIC ITALY? By Roy Jenkins, M.P.	200
SO THEY SAY . . . By Autolycus	200
LALLANS. By Neil McCallum	201
THE ARTS AND ENTERTAINMENT:	
New Stravinsky. By Desmond Shawe-Taylor	201
Radio Notes. By William Salter	202
The Movies. By William Whitebait	203
CORRESPONDENCE	204
From Guy W. Keeling; G. E. R. Gedye; Christopher Buckley; George Kamm; Christopher Brunel; Maurice Irvine; Harry G. Knight; Marion Pascoe; C. L. Shaw; Ivor Brown; and Stephen Murray.	
BOOKS IN GENERAL. By A. J. P. Taylor	207
REVIEWS:	
Heat of the Day. By Walter Allen	208
George Fox. By H. R. Trevor-Roper	209
The Nollekens Bequest. By Ralph Partridge	210
The Public Schools. By Hunter Diack	211
New Novels. By Julia Strachey	211
Pious Perjury. By C. H. Rolph	212
Society. By Leonard Woolf	213
WEEK-END COMPETITIONS	214

ELECTORAL EXCURSIONS

SOME newspapers have suggested that the Labour Party may stage an unexpected General Election in the next few months. The decision, it is said, will be dictated by success or failure in the South Hammersmith by-election; if Labour follows up its Batley success by holding South Hammersmith, then 1949 is clearly a suitable year in which to ask for a national vote of confidence. This suggestion, we take it, is a journalistic decoration, added to give excitement to an otherwise depressing news page. There are, of course, advantages in having an unexpected election. The Labour Party is, however, committed to a Parliament Act and a Steel Bill (which seems to rouse none of the anticipated excitement); these cannot become law until the spring of 1950. Labour is hardly likely to jettison an unfinished programme in order to pick up a momentary advantage.

Labour needs no tricky electioneering. Domestically, the country and the Government are doing rather well. We are, it is true, uncomfortably dependent on the precarious economy of the United States, but that would have happened whatever Government was in power. We can at least claim to be more rapidly approaching independence than other countries which have not attempted to plan their economy. The dollar gap is being closed much more quickly than we had dared to hope. Such evidence of an improved position as Mr. Strachey's decision to end the sweet ration is impressive when carried through by a Government whose economic policy has been resolutely austere. The main electioneering issue to-day is what it is popularly described as "the rising cost of living." What are the facts? The price index which now, in its revised form, reflects with reasonable accuracy the normal household budget, has risen by some 9 per cent. over the last 18 months. This is a much less serious increase than is usually assumed. During the last few months the figure has been almost stationary. The explanation of the general belief that the cost of living has lately "soared" seems to be that the shops are now far better stocked, often with goods at prices which are regrettably high. In short, many of us have the impression that the cost of living has been rising sharply because we are now tempted to buy innumerable luxury or semi-luxury articles which we had put out of our minds during the war and its aftermath. It is true that high costs of clothing and foot-wear press heavily on the budgets of working-class households—especially those with young children. The basic fact remains that the necessities of life are still to be bought in this country at prices which the overwhelming mass of the people can without difficulty afford—a state of affairs of which no other belligerent country in Europe can boast.

The Labour Government is open to criticism on many counts, but its general record both in fulfilling its electoral pledges and in guiding the national economy has been good. The Conservatives are well aware of this, and in their hearts the more responsible of them rejoice that it should be so, and are aware that in office they might do much less well themselves. They could no more return to the Whiggery of Mr. Churchill than to the undiluted *laissez-faire* economy of Sir Waldron Smithers. The limits within which the British economy can work are to-day narrowly restricted by the international situation. The Conservatives are now, therefore, in a dilemma. Electorally they must somehow or other pretend that the Labour Government is plunging the country into ruin. As Mr. Bevan said in his rollicking and unanswerable reply to criticism of his National Health Estimates last week, the Tory Party is no longer a "jocund" Party.

> Pale and miserable lot. Every increase in the health of the nation, the buoyancy of the nation, and the vitality of the nation, instead of welcoming all that, they groan at it. They hate it because they think it spells electoral defeat.

It will be seen that the Conservative dilemma is similar to that of the Communists. They, too, know that by and large the workers are not doing badly in this country, and are getting something like a fair deal. We are moving towards Socialism slowly, precariously perhaps, but in that direction. There is no doubt that the common man has found the Labour Party a reasonable political instrument. Theoretically, the Communists, like the Conservatives, must attempt to destroy this brand of evolutionary Socialism. In practice, again like the Conservatives, they dare do no more than snipe at it. Communists and Conservatives are at one in lacking an alternative policy in which ordinary people can believe. To their mutual dismay, it is Labour which can now claim to be the National Party.

More Defence Pacts?

Though no formal reply has yet been sent from Oslo to the Russian offer of a non-aggression pact, the terms of the resolution passed by the Norwegian Labour Party in favour of "binding co-operation in the political sphere with the Western democracies" suggest that beyond doubt Norway will eventually subscribe to the Atlantic Pact. With Sweden still firm in her adherence to the policy of neutrality, the Danish Government, in turn, is reported to have been inquiring from the State Department on what condition, as a non-signatory of the Pact, she could expect to receive deliveries of arms from the United States. The answer is said to have been that the condition for such assistance would be the granting to the United States of a lease of air bases in Greenland. Two such bases, established by the U.S. Air Force during the war, are still in American occupation; but Denmark has never formally approved their acquisition by the U.S.A., and fears that such a step would be regarded in Moscow as an act of hostility. Meanwhile, Mr. Bevin has been discussing, first with the Turkish Foreign Minister, M. Sadak, and then with Mr. Tsaldaris, of Greece, the question of a Mediterranean Pact, to which Egypt, Syria and Palestine would doubtless be asked to subscribe. The question also appears to be mooted in Washington whether steps could not perhaps be taken to offset Communist victories in China by concluding, with American endorsement, a defensive grouping of which India, Pakistan and Afghanistan would be the nucleus. All these pacts are doubtless compatible with the intentions of the United Nations' Charter. The trouble is that they involve strategic planning which Moscow is bound to regard as potentially aggressive.

Civil Service Salaries

We entertain grave doubts about the Chancellor's decision to accept the recommendation of the Chorley Committee that the salaries attached to the higher posts in the Civil Service should be raised by amounts ranging from £300 to £1,250 a year. Making due allowance for pension rights, the remuneration of the top grades in the Civil Service has failed, it is true, since 1939 to keep pace with the increase in the cost of living of the professional class; and, though comparisons with the earnings of big business executives are not strictly relevant, it is perhaps anomalous that Permanent Secretaries and their senior lieutenants in Departments of State should enjoy incomes very much smaller than those accorded to their opposite numbers on the boards of nationalised industries. The cost of making these improvements in Civil Service salaries is put at £400,000 a year—a sum which will presumably be increased by the consequential revision, which will certainly be necessary, of salaries in some middle grades and in the foreign and colonial service. Admittedly, the total expenditure involved is relatively small; and no one suggests that the right way to cheapen the cost of the Civil Service is to be cheese-paring in salaries. The rational way to effect economies is to recruit men whose ability rightly commands good pay, and who could often replace a larger number of subordinate officials. At the same time, it is idle to ignore the probability that this upward revision of salaries in the senior ranks of the Civil Service will have repercussions in other directions, and these will add to the difficulty of maintaining the present policy of limiting increases in personal incomes. True, the recommended additions to pay are to come into effect gradually; but this does not affect the principle which has now been conceded. Quite apart from reactions in the sphere of industrial wages, it may be taken for granted that there will now be irresistible pressure to secure a substantial upward revision in salaries in the higher ranks of education—especially in the universities. Nor will it end here; the scales of salaries of scientists, doctors and others will now be challenged. In brief, the Chorley Committee appears to us to have set an inflationary snow-ball rolling; and politically the Government is exposing itself to the charge that it makes concessions to well-paid bureaucrats which it finds excellent economic grounds for refusing to the workers.

Miners' Wages

It is in relation to wages in key industries—coal mining, transport and cotton—that the revision of Civil Service salaries will be most difficult to reconcile with the policy of wage-pegging. In the case of coal, last week's rejection by the N.C.B. of the miners' claim for an addition to the cost-of-living allowance underlines the need for revising the entire wage-structure of the industry. The N.U.M.'s case is that the allowance has remained unaltered since 1947, whereas the cost of living has risen by nearly 10 per cent. The Board's reply was that wages had been raised quite substantially in the meantime by additions to the basic rates, and that there was no obligation under the existing agreement to raise the allowances as well. The solution is clearly to end the existing wage-structure, which is a hotch-potch hardly anyone can understand, and to consolidate basic rates, percentage additions and allowances into a new wage-system that will take proper account of the big changes in conditions that have come about in recent years. The N.U.M. has been at work for some time on proposals for a new wage-structure, and is reported to have got them nearly ready for presentation to the N.C.B. They are bound to raise complicated issues and are certain, in their initial form, to involve a substantial increase in the total wage bill. The process of reconciling the proposals with the Board's hopes of covering costs, including heavy interest charges, out of current takings will obviously involve prolonged bargaining. In the meantime, the N.U.M. has to decide whether or not to endorse the renewal of the agreement, which expires in April, for overtime working. This raises the question whether to continue the Saturday shift, which is uneconomic in many areas, or to extend the alternative practice of an extra half-hour on each daily shift. In face of man-power shortage, it is difficult to see how the planned output for 1949 can be achieved without some form of overtime working.

Off the Ration

Mr. Strachey has given us all a generous and pleasant surprise. The total abolition of sweet rationing at the end of April is a bold gesture which will do much to prove that his much-maligned Ministry does not seek to preserve rationing for its own sake. This was a difficult decision to make, for it is the first instance in which a major commodity has been derationed while it still remains a partial substitute for goods in short supply. Clothing may be released in stages, since pent-up demand for shirts is not diverted to shoes or overcoats when they become available. But while our diet remains deficient in variety and energy-providing foods, some of the gap can and will be bridged by chocolate and other confectionery. It was sensible, therefore, to precede the release of sweets by the free sale of preserves and by an increase in the supply of sugar to the domestic consumer, both of which will go a long way to satisfy the nation's sweet tooth—and require, incidentally, much more sugar than sweets. At first, it is probable that certain kinds of sweets, especially the popular medium-priced packaged varieties, will be in short supply. But the manufacturers and the Food Ministry are both convinced that, after an initial rush, demand will settle down to something like its present rationed level. They believe that many people who now buy their ration will not bother in future and that price—well above the pre-war level—will be a sufficient deterrent against large-scale increases in consumption. These assumptions are quite reasonable, and they will not be upset by any temporary dislocation. Mr. Strachey is right to make this experiment.

Chinese Peace

A newspaper in Canton has just published the Government's peace proposals, and the Communists in Peiping are reported to have promised to transmit them to their Executive Committee. The chief of the Nanking professors' peace mission has stated that these Government proposals suggest an immediate cease-fire; the withdrawal by both sides to 40 miles from their present positions; both sides to release political prisoners; both sides to guarantee freedom of speech; the Nationalist and Communist armies to be merged into a single defence army; a Coalition Government of six Communists, six Kuomintang and six others; the Communists to choose the site for a political consultation. There is a wide divergence between these proposals and those put forward by Mao Tse-tung more than a month ago. Moreover, the Kuomintang leaders seem to be divided and to represent no one but themselves. The acting President, Li Tsung-jen, has this week been in Canton, where he met Premier Sun Fo and his Cabinet, and also received representatives of the foreign diplomatic missions. He is now off to Hunan and Kwangsi, two Provinces where the Kuomintang still hope they can rally support, relying presumably on the fact that at different periods in Chinese history they have shown strong separatist tendencies. But guerrilla activities are also reported in those areas; further, it would seem unlikely that peasant armies would fight for the Kuomintang in the South any more enthusiastically than they did North of the Yangtse. Li Tsung-jen may hope for foreign support for a Kuomintang regime based on the South; certainly feelers have been put out in this direction. In this situation, it is not surprising that peace talks in Peking make no headway, and that the Communists have just launched a bitter attack on Li Tsung-jen.

Trade Progress

British exports in January reached the record level of 162 per cent. of the 1938 volume. Despite a rise in the cost of imports, the adverse visible balance of trade fell to £23 million, including costs of transport to this country; and, when shipping services are brought into the account, the real adverse balance is considerably lower. Once again, machinery and vehicles were responsible for the major part of the rise in exports, textiles showing only a small increase. The figures emphasise the growing dependence of export trade on world demand for capital goods—a type of trade highly vulnerable to the influence of depressions, but likely to remain high for a long time if there is no American slump. Over all, Britain is now practically solvent on international account; but this, of course, does not remove the dollar difficulty. The figures for the whole year 1948 show that there were still heavy unfavourable balances with the U.S.A., Canada and the Argentine, as well as considerable deficits with New Zealand, Australia and the U.S.S.R., to which we exported remarkably little, despite the Anglo-Russian trading agreement. Trade with France almost balanced, and there was a small favourable balance in trade with Benelux and Sweden. All the big unfavourable balances were much smaller than in 1947, mainly because of domestic cuts in imports from dollar areas, but also partly through larger exports, especially to the U.S.A. On the whole, the present year has begun much better than earlier forecasts had led people to expect; and the record is the more remarkable because we are still paying very high prices for much of our imported food and raw materials.

The U.S.S.R. Withdraws

It is discouraging to find that the Russians have retracted their one gesture towards co-operation with the outside world—their membership of the World Health Organisation. It was the one specialised agency of the United Nations which they had agreed to join, and it was hoped that this might be an indication of their relaxation of their boycott of others like F.A.O. and Unesco. The Russians had been very active and right-minded in the creation of W.H.O. and its work for common humanity. Health, it seemed, was the one subject they admitted to be above ideological conflict. Indeed, Soviet enthusiasm for W.H.O. was enough to make the organisation suspect by the reactionary 80th Congress of the United States, which at one stage withheld the appropriation for U.S. membership; and American ratification of the charter of W.H.O. had to follow the delegation on its way to Geneva for the inaugural meeting. Now the U.S.S.R. and the Ukrainian and White Russian Republics have resigned. Their professed reasons are flimsy. They say that they are not satisfied with the work on international measures for the prevention and control of diseases and that the swollen administrative machinery of W.H.O. involves expenses which are too heavy for the member States to bear. W.H.O. has been only 4½ months in existence. Its programme is based on the instructions of the inaugural conference of which Russia was a member. It is only just recruiting its administration, and the contribution of the Russian Republics is only £70,000. That is not an excessive price to pay for the incalculable benefits which Russia or any other nation can secure through the combined resources of world medicine, and there has certainly not been time to reach any judgment on W.H.O.'s performance. Ironically enough, Russia cannot withdraw, any more than it can be expelled from W.H.O., since the charter makes no such provisions. It may not pay its dues, and it may not enjoy the facilities, but it is still a member.

IN PARLIAMENT: Health and Hammersmith

Wednesday

THE evening Beverley Baxter spent at Hammersmith was rather like the night the bed fell on Thurber's father—the unexpected jostling the fantastic. First, the Attorney-General singled him out in the audience and praised him for his piano-playing. Then Baxter saw and heard Things. He saw Nally deliver a self-righteous, unctuous speech at a time when Nally, who hadn't been to Hammersmith for years, was actually on the Manchester train. General comment in the House was that Baxter might do well to get himself a pair of spectacles—Mr. Bevan's free-for-all kind.

The National Health Service Debate was the background to much of the Hammersmith campaign. Before it began, taunted and harried by Labour Members for failing to move his promised Vote of Censure, exasperated by Morrison's deprecating courtesy at this reluctance, Churchill snarled at last, with an undertone of malice: "Whether the Government will face a first-class attack will entirely depend on the amount of evidence adduced against them in the examination by the *tribunal* of the House of Commons."

When Blenkinsop, the new Parliamentary Secretary to the Ministry of Health, rose to present the Estimates, Churchill slowly left his place, paused to lean on the back of the Clerk of the Table's chair, then trudged from the Chamber without a backward glance. If Bevan had been guilty of muddle, dissipation of public funds and departmental blunders, as he had charged the week before, Churchill wasn't going to vote against him this week—not with a by-election on. You could see Churchill ruminating as he went out, "Hammersmith is worth a Mess."

Blenkinsop had to deal with the statistics of the Health Service. He did so clearly and reasonably. Towards the end of his speech, dropping the cloak of figures, he said, "Look! People!" And the House conjured up the long procession of all those long-deprived of medical care, whose great needs have helped to make the cost of the Service high.

As the first challenger to Bevan, the Tories put up one of their expendable Front Benchers, Ralph Assheton. In his usual interventions, Assheton darts to the despatch-box, pecks at the air, and quickly retreats, leaving a puzzled House to interpret his purpose. On this occasion, the Tories had obviously got together beforehand to work out whom they could best afford to lose. Then they must have shaken Assheton by the hand, led him to the despatch-box, and told him to go in and win.

Pledged to an attack from which his leader had withdrawn his other supporters, Assheton, a mild man, tried to lash himself into vigour. He used emphatic words, and in a final exhortation—unrelated to what preceded it—he called on Bevan to resign. This desperate suggestion raised a laugh, and Bevan, in his magisterial summing-up, disposed of Assheton with one push. "A weak man," he said, "shouldn't use strong adjectives."

The Minister of Health's speech was a unique combination of logic, irony, humanity and debating skill. In answering the Tories, he had on his side the millions who benefit from the National Health Service; opposed to him were those who, like Eccles, thought that although the National Health Service is popular, to retain the value of money is an even more popular cause. Yet the Tories wouldn't assert their faith in the Lobbies, and received Bevan's charge of hypocrisy with no more than a flinch.

The general debate was moderate. Stoddart-Scott for the Tories advanced some helpful criticisms and the mixed and rather cannibalistic image that "Britain's teeth are not the brightest pearls in our country's diadem." Sir Henry Morris-Jones, another distinguished doctor and a National Liberal, was all set to make a searching examination of the Health Service, when he quoted a letter about bureaucratic lavishness in a certain hospital whose identity he wouldn't disclose. This led to a prolonged hullabaloo of interruptions, which went on for so long that the interesting opening of Morris-Jones' speech was forgotten, and he himself, adamant but unruffled, seemed to tire of his own speech, and sat down.

MAURICE EDELMAN

INDEFINITELY POSTPONED?

IN the Marxist gospel no prophecy is made more emphatically than that which asserts the inevitability of capitalist crisis. There is, we are told, in the very heart of capitalism a fatal contradiction which, at the moment of its seeming triumph, wrecks the productive machine. Crisis follows crisis with an increasing momentum, until at length capitalism plunges into that final crisis which can be resolved only by revolution. Then the proletariat snaps its chains; and, on the ruins, under leaders who understand the march of history, the workers set about building the new people's democracy that will prepare the way for the classless society of the future.

That such a slump must come in the U.S.A. is a belief which has influenced significantly the attitude—now aggressive, now cautious—of the Soviet Union to the Western world. Acceptance of the assumption that Western capitalism has this mortal disease in its core has made the Russians ready to believe that every act of American diplomacy has been a preparation for a third world war which the capitalists would launch in a frantic endeavour to escape from the contradictions inherent in their economic system. War, they knew, could be used to sustain an economy threatened with mass unemployment: it could serve to postpone the day of reckoning. War, then, is a disaster which must be stalled off. If it can be postponed until crisis has enveloped the capitalist countries, it may be wholly averted, since revolutions may forestall it. Alternatively, if it does come, it may be turned into a revolutionary war in which the armies of the East would overrun the West as saviours of the suffering peoples. On the other hand, if war came sooner, the outcome would be much more doubtful, and it might need a fourth world war, fought amid the ruins of civilisation, to accomplish the revolution.

No wonder, then, that anyone in the Soviet Union who expresses doubts concerning American capitalism's impending crisis is in danger of being denounced as disloyal to Marxist faith. Not for the first time, Professor Varga has recently been guilty of this sin—at any rate, to the extent of warning the Soviet leaders that they may have to wait a considerable time for the contradictions of capitalism to reach the required bursting point. If we understand rightly what he has said, Professor Varga has not repudiated the view that ultimately capitalism will reach its final crisis; he has only asserted that there may still be a good deal more life in the old dog than Soviet statesmen care to admit. But to assert even this is, from the Soviet standpoint, to declare that the next war may come before conditions are ripe for world revolution—a disturbing, unpalatable thought.

Is Professor Varga a false, as well as, in the eyes of the Cominform, an unpopular prophet? At present, in the U.S.A., a severe fall in farm prices, following upon a bumper harvest, has frightened the speculators and set all the lobbies in Washington busily to work. Marshall Aid, which began at least partly in a mood of generosity and then shifted towards being an indispensable part of American strategic preparations for a possible world war, has begun to take on a new aspect: it is regarded as a necessary means to the maintenance of American exports. "Off-shore" dollar purchases are being opposed on the ground that they curtail the market for American goods such as wheat and maize; and there is a growing tendency in Washington to tell Europe that it must take what the U.S. wants to get rid of, rather than what is most needed for European recovery. Yet, notwithstanding the apprehensions of speculators and the agitations of lobbyists, proof is still lacking that the great American boom is on the point of collapse. When Mr. Truman sent his Message to Congress last month, he spoke optimistically, though not without qualifications and admissions of potential danger. His economic advisers clearly did not regard the price recessions as indications of a coming general crisis.

Most prices, the President emphasised, had fallen little or not at all; some were still rising sharply, and inflation, rather than undue deflation, was still the danger. It might, he admitted, be necessary to safeguard particular groups of producers by the established technique of maintaining minimum prices—e.g., for wheat and other key farm products. But he was still insisting, last month, on the need for higher taxation, not only to meet higher expenditure but also to ensure a large budget surplus which would take excessive purchasing power off the market. He conceded that profits had been appropriating a still larger proportion of the national income than in 1947, and that wages and salaries in many occupations had failed to keep up with the cost of living. The President and his advisers, however, were clearly hopeful that, with the aid of a budget surplus and some controls, prices in the inflated sectors could be brought down enough to raise popular purchasing power, and that in the threatened sectors they could be prevented from falling so far as to create a crisis.

Nothing that has occurred since January has made this diagnosis generally inapplicable. Unloading by speculators has pushed cereal prices down much further than was foreseen; but there is still no clear evidence that the recession is yet becoming general. Metal prices are still firm, and heavy industry continues to be active. The Administration is still confident that, even if the recession does threaten to spread, it is master of the situation, and that—with E.R.P. to help it—it can apply adequate remedial measures, at any rate for some time to come.

The question that remains unanswered is whether the United States can succeed not merely in stalling off a crisis, but in preventing it ever happening at all. Have the new Keynesian economics really resolved the contradictions of capitalism? Can a government which is prepared to make full employment its master objective manage, by decisive spending and control, to keep capitalist production permanently on an even keel? To these questions the Marxist will reply, first, that what is economically feasible may not be politically practicable: even though the economic technique needed for averting crisis is known, the reluctance of Congress and big business to submit to the required controls, and to vote the required appropriations for the right purposes, may well prevent the correct policy from being put into effect until too late. Furthermore, the Marxist will argue, even the Roosevelt policies, which were fundamentally Keynesian, failed to eliminate the mass unemployment of the Great Depression until rearmament and, later, war expenditure, produced the boom of the past ten years. Even to-day the enormous Federal expenditure on armaments—compared with which social reform spending is tiny—is the decisive factor supporting the key sectors of the American economy. Hence the United States, the Marxist contends, cannot afford any curtailment of a military programme which in itself gives a further momentum to the policy of imperialist expansion, with all the attendant risks of war.

These factors make it difficult to form a decided view of the future pattern in the United States. Keynes and his successors have demonstrated how in theory capitalist crises can be, if not altogether eliminated, at least kept within bounds. They have not shown either that this can be done by *any* country unless the U.S. gives the lead, or that the U.S. will in practice bring itself to act in time, in the right way. The possibility therefore of a world slump spreading outwards from the U.S. to the furthest corners of the capitalist world still exists. It can, however, hardly be regarded any longer as a certainty, ex-

cept by the most dogmatic Marxists; and, unless American business men lose their heads, it seems unlikely to occur for some years ahead. Another bumper harvest could, no doubt, lead to a further fall in American farm prices, and hence to further shocks to American confidence. But, in a world still badly short of food, there are many ways in which the Americans can get rid of their surpluses. Effectively applied, Mr. Truman's programme of development for "backward areas"—especially if these include parts of the backward South—could go far to replace capital expenditure on armaments. Economic prophecy is perilous: few foresaw the crises of 1921 and 1931 until they broke. We are inclined, however, to think that, even though the refusal of the ruling class in the United States to tolerate greater equality of incomes may ultimately bring to a head the classical contradiction of capitalism in that country, there is still a margin in the United States permitting escape from the dilemma of over-production without recourse to the solution of aggressive imperialism.

THE NEW PATTERN OF THE RUHR

In terms of output, the Ruhr is doing well. Outwardly it is still a shambles; but somewhere underneath the rubble the wheels are humming, and hardly a week goes by without new post-war production records being established. With basic necessities—stable money and sufficient food—assured, the agitation by party politicians against the Ruhr Statute has an air of unreality. The workers seem little concerned about it, and the trade unions are discouraging protests. As for the industrialists, growing numbers feel, and state openly, that Ruhr industry is now in such shape that they can afford to ignore the "Ruhr Diktat." They calculate that the impetus of Ruhr production which has now been released will soon create its own laws; that it will be the international authority which will have to adapt itself to the developing pattern of Ruhr industry; that whatever control the Allies now think to impose will be gradually swept away by the growing pressure of Germany's industrial expansion; and that, in two or three year's time, the Allies will have to admit that the West German Republic is once again the most powerful single unit on the European continent, no matter how many paper Statutes are superimposed on its sovereignty.

In 1948, hard coal production totalled just over 87 million tons, or 16 million more than in the previous year, and Allied Control officers fully expect the pre-war output rate of 117 million tons to be recovered before the end of 1949. Steel production in 1948 totalled 5.4 million tons, or almost double the output for 1947, and in December the output rate was 70 per cent. of the "permitted" level of 10.7 million tons. This should be reached by the end of 1949, and already a clamour is arising for its upward revision in the interests of the full development of Germany's export capacity and the attainment of balance in Western Germany's trade. The Germans hope, and some of the Allies fear, that by the end of this year political and economic developments will have made a revision of the permitted steel level inescapable.

Meanwhile, the structure of the Ruhr's two key industries, coal and steel, is about to be changed by the steps taken to carry out Military Government Law No. 75. Under this Law, published last November, the two industries are to be reorganised separately. The divorce of ownership from management, and of coal from steel, is still officially to be the basis of Allied policy. Whether it will work out that way, is another matter. Coal is at present the responsibility of an Anglo-American Coal Control Group at Essen, which handed over the entire management to the German Coal-mining Administration in November, 1947, but retained control of distribution. It is now proposed to re-group the old Combines' constituents into about 20 companies, each supervised by German trustees, who will exercise the normal rights of ownership. The Control Group decides which industrial units are to be bracketed together, and also selects the trustees on the recommendation of a number of German organisations such as the Association of Mining Executives, the Trade Union Federation, the North Rhine - Westphalia Ministry of Economics, the Economic Council at Frankfurt, the Institute of West German Banks, and others. Nominations have now been received from all these bodies, and the names of the trustees will shortly be announced. The present German Coal-mining Administration (DBKL) will remain in existence as a "General Policy Board" for the trustees, but will itself receive directives from a "Supervisory Board" whose members will be chosen from the trustees of individual companies.

If this sounds complicated, the plans for the steel industry are still more involved. Up to now, this has been the concern solely of the British; but it is now proposed to transform the Control into a Three-Power body entitled the North German Steel Group, with headquarters at Düsseldorf. There are to be three Joint Chairmen—American, British and French—who will each (with a deputy, and an integrated tripartite staff) run one department. The British will be responsible for "finance and reorganisation," the Americans for "production and technical development" and the French for "distribution." On the British side it is likely that two Civil Servants now in the Steel Control will be selected. The French are said to intend appointing a high executive of their own steel industry, who now represents French steel interests in O.E.E.C. The Americans have brought over from New York a team of high-powered industrial tycoons, of whom one at least is a representative of U.S. Steel. The result may be a curious situation, in which British Civil Servants will be confronted in the "Group" by a majority composed of American and French steel magnates.

The first task of these six men will be to appoint German trustees; and the same German organisations as in the case of the coal industry have been asked to propose candidates. To begin with, there will be twelve trustees, who will form a Steel Trustee Association. Its task will be to map out new companies formed, as in coal, by re-grouping the component parts of the dissolved combines. Each company will have five trustees, who will act as representatives of the owners, and will each hold 20 per cent. of the shares in his own name. One of the five must be a member of the Trustee Association; and, if the number of new companies proves to be greater than twelve, the membership of the Association will require to be correspondingly enlarged. Out of six lists of candidates so far submitted only one has seen the light of day. This is the list proposed by Dr. Pünder, the President of the Economic Council at Frankfurt. He recommends five prominent representatives of the former German steel trusts, four trade union delegates and one representative each for the Deutscher Laender Bank, the Administrative Office for Iron and Steel and the Decartelisation Office. The most interesting names are those of the industrialists who include Dr. Albertz (late of Mannesmann), Dr. Engel (Hoesch), Dr. Henle (Kloeckner), Herr Sohl (Vereinigte Stahlwerke) and Herr Barich (Chairman of the *Wirtschaftsvereinigung Eisen und Stahlindustrie*). This would mean that, out of the former "Big Six" Ruhr Combines, which Herr Dinkelbach, with his British-supervised Decartelisation Office, broke up in 1946, four at least would again be represented in the Trustee Association.

German big business now believes that it has American support for at least a partial restoration of the old system of "vertical integration"—i.e., joint management of coal-mines, blast furnaces, rolling mills and related industries. The trade unions, on the other hand, claim that they have British backing for their insistence that within the new industrial structure there must be a complete divorce of coal from steel. They are also confident that, when it meets, the West German Parliament will decide to nationalise both industries. The Social-democrats will certainly lose no time in introducing a Bill to this effect, and some leading members of the Christian Democratic Union admit that their party may be compelled to vote for the Bill, if only to avoid alienating the Christian trade unions on whose support they depend to defeat the Socialists in other fields.

PETER DE MENDELSSOHN

Düsseldorf.

"MY RICE FOR A LOAN"

His lively yellow-brown face, a little mischievous maybe, but charming and attractive, wrinkled up for its final burst of excited explanation of the state of Burma. "We can't breathe," he said, "our lung space is collapsed." His guests laughed. It seemed a joke; we had eaten a seven-course dinner, liqueurs were on the table, and it was pleasantly luxurious to sit on the verandah and feel the cool night air lightly touching your face after the day of hot sun. Above our heads shone a long tube of fluorescent lighting, now in demand in Burma to replace the three million light bulbs lost in the war. Around us was the garden where, in the afternoon, we had watched a woman kissing a cobra. It was kind of her to do it for strangers. It was her first performance since her husband had been killed doing the same thing three weeks before.

Kindness, cheerfulness, and hospitality—the Burman is master and servant of all three. They conceal ugly situations, make them matter less than the uncomfortably drilled and tidy Western mind thinks they ought to matter. If it were England or France, one would say Burma was bankrupt; our businessman host was right. But the joke which his Burmese guests saw was a subtle one. We had eaten well, but not much better than the ordinary Burman. Sixpence will still buy a huge plate of rice, chicken curry and other delicacies. Prepare it yourself, and it is much cheaper. The Burmese equivalent of the British workman has more to eat than his counterpart. His wants, apart from food, are fewer and more easily supplied. A few bamboo mats, poles and some straw: he has a house. The village band, an all-night theatre show provided by some strolling players, a cane ball to kick up in the air: he has his entertainments. Chaos or order, the food will always be enough. Burma can never be bankrupt.

But she *is* bankrupt. And unless she stops being bankrupt, there will be no money to pay the officials, the police and the military; and there will be no chance of raising the standard of living (and, despite contentment, there is strong feeling that more comforts and more cloth should be available). To-day, Burma is, quite simply, living beyond her income. It is not merely a matter of foreign exchange; the Treasury is empty, no internal loans can be raised, and there is no Bank of England to tide things over. In the first year of the Government there was a budget surplus. The second year began with an estimated deficit of £8 million. It has now gone up to £14 million, and by the time the year is over it will probably be £20–25 million. Not much by European standards, but large when the total expenditure for a year is only around £40 million.

Burmese revenue has two main props—the profits from the sale of rice and land taxation. Smaller ingredients are timber profits, income tax (mostly paid by British firms and such Chinese and Indian firms as do not keep two sets of books) and customs duties. Nearly all these sources have been hit hard by the insurrections. It has been hard to collect the land tax from the culti-

vators. Not enough timber has been brought down the river to allow for export as well as home use. Shortage of foreign exchange through failure to export has restricted imports, and consequently lessened the duties payable. To add to the loss in direct revenue, the insurgents have a habit of looting local treasuries. On the other side, there is heavily increased military expenditure. And now there is difficulty over selling the rice. One and a quarter million tons is what they hope to export this year. Disturbances will knock some of that off, but it may be possible to bring three-quarters of a million tons down to the ports. But to get it to the ports it has to be bought from the cultivators; to buy it the agents must borrow money from the Government; and the Government has no money.

Last year the Government borrowed—in the main from British banks—and sold the rice through the British Ministry of Food. This year they thought they would get a better price if they cut out the Ministry of Food and sold elsewhere. The banks said: "No loan if the Ministry of Food doesn't handle the rice." After attempts to find other buyers, the Government gave up, returned to John Strachey's arms, and approached the banks again. That was a chance for the banks to demonstrate the friendship and willingness of British business. But bankers are commercial men . . . the country looks untidy . . . the Government must guarantee to guard all the rice mills (which is impossible) . . . and so far there is no loan for the rice. Time is going on and the money must come immediately from somewhere, or Malaya and India will go hungry this year.

The best solution is a British loan to cover the budget deficit. If granted, the loan (or part of it) must arrive in the next few weeks to do any good. Then the Government can buy the rice and know that it can keep going for another year. It will probably need another budget loan next year and the year after that, or the previous loans will be wasted. Who is to provide the loans? Principally the British, because we have more to lose by not giving them. Apart from the considerable value of British business in Burma—and this depends on the stability of the present regime—Malaya and India both concern Britain greatly, and they cannot live without Burma's rice. Given peace, rice production will go up, and in a few years should be nearing the pre-war export figure of 3¼ million tons. Can we afford to lose that rice, even if the price be stiff?

Rangoon. WOODROW WYATT

A LONDON DIARY

THERE is little or no logic in the blood sports controversy. No one denies that destructive animals have to be killed, but neither can anyone seriously argue that the cheapest, most effective and kindest way of killing them is for packs of people to put on costly fancy dress and to chase them to their death with the help of the best bred horses and hounds specially trained for the purpose. No, cant aside, hunting and coursing are maintained because they give pleasure to the people who take part in them. The pleasure, at least in the case of fox-hunting, is of a special kind; it is a ritual, a "way of life." There are some hundreds of people to whom the idea of suppressing hunting rouses the same kind of emotion that would be evoked in others by a proposal compulsorily to shut all the churches. Knowing this, Mr. Seymour Cocks has left fox-hunting to a separate Bill and concentrated on forbidding such sports as the coursing of hares and the chasing of the carted deer. A majority of the Commons would probably like to vote for his Bill. After all, unless people have been brought up in that particular perversion, they prefer that hares should be shot for food, rather than that they should be torn to pieces by dogs and that stags should be expertly killed rather than they should be chased, terrified, into water and then dragged out by men in boats so that their throats can be cut. Nevertheless, I doubt if Mr. Cocks' Bill will pass. The electoral repercussions of interfering with coursing and stag hunting, let alone fox-hunting, are apparently serious. Just as publicans are trying to persuade their customers that the Government intends to nationalise the pubs and prevent anybody from playing darts in them, so ignorant villagers are being induced to believe that they soon will be forbidden to go out after rabbits with a dog and a gun. The fear that such propaganda is making headway in the villages is sufficiently great to lead the Government to make strenuous efforts to prevent Labour Members from voting against blood sports.

* * *

In the competition for the week's most unlikely spy story Washington is now leading by a short head. Two bids come from the Communists' world. The "confessions" of the Bulgarian Baptists will not convince anyone in the West. We have had too many confessions. The second Iron Curtain bid is the arrest of Anna Louise Strong for spying on behalf of the United States. As if this charge was not already unlikely enough, we now have *Borba*, the official Yugoslav Communist paper, disclosing that Miss Strong's warmly pro-Communist book, *Dawn in China*, was officially endorsed by the Communist hierarchy and sent to Belgrade in manuscript by the Chief of the Department of Books in Moscow with instructions to get it translated for Yugoslavs. The probability is that Miss Strong has been arrested because, in her enthusiasm for Chinese Communism, she may have emphasised its independence of Moscow. This line exactly suited Soviet propaganda a year ago, but it is probably offensive to the Kremlin now that Chinese Communism is victorious. Deported from Russia, Miss Strong is now wanted by the Committee on Un-American Activities.

* * *

At first sight it might seem hard to act more absurdly than the Russians have in this case. Washington, however, has been equal to the task. The War Department has now admitted that the publication of the story about Agnes Smedley and Guenther Stein being the centre of a Soviet spy ring in the Pacific was a *faux pas*. According to Colonel Eyster, Deputy Chief of the Army's Public Information Division, the report had not been properly "edited." The "philosophy" of it had been added by American Intelligence agents in Japan. It was based not on American information, but on Japanese police reports. He might have added that the story was published months ago in the American magazine *Plain Talk*. In short, American Intelligence in Japan has actually published as evidence of espionage against the United States the dossiers compiled during the war by the Japanese police. Japan's Intelligence was naturally interested in the activities of Americans who promoted Chinese resistance to Tokio. To take this anti-Japanese activity as espionage against the United States (which was then at war with Japan) is surely something of a record, even for an Intelligence Service. Adding insult to injury, the War Department, forced to admit that the story was unfounded, still implies that Miss Smedley and Mr. Stein *may* be guilty; though it merely says that there is insufficient evidence to charge them! I presume that public opinion in America will now force the War Department to make a humble apology and insist that some tangible reward for public service on behalf of the United States should now be given to Miss Smedley and Mr. Stein for their distinguished part in maintaining China's resistance against Japanese aggression.

* * *

Mr. J. H. Brebner (to journalists one of the most useful and popular of the Ministry of Information officials during the war) explains that he is not really guilty of tautology in giving his new pamphlet the title of *Public Relations and Publicity* (Institute of Public Administration, 2s. net). Public relations concern the individual; publicity the mass. Or, as I should put it, public relations are the art of soothing the fears or the fury of Tom, Dick or Harry; publicity is the art of putting over a policy, or sometimes a Minister. Mr. Brebner sees that this new profession has created its own evils. For instance, the P.R.O. is one of the causes for the decline in reporting. Once the pressman had to get his story, if possible ahead of his rivals; now when he starts hunting he is referred to the P.R.O. "It is to be feared," says Mr. Brebner, "that the temptations to dishonesty are strong in Government relations with the Press. These temptations must be absolutely resisted. Time and time again official denials have been issued in respect of statements in the newspapers, the facts of which have later been confirmed by the department concerned. It is natural that the Press will cease to consult departments who adopt such methods." If this really happens time and time again, we are getting the worst of both worlds. The case of the P.R.O. is that he substitutes accuracy for the old-fashioned haphazard scramble for the scoop. The dull official truth may serve the public better than the unofficial truth eked out with a little journalistic imagination. But Mr. Brebner is certainly right that if the handout has not even the merit of accuracy then we have thrown away the colour and excitement of irresponsible private enterprise without getting any compensation in exchange!

* * *

Bradford has a Bill before Parliament which has been convulsing the local press. It contained a clause that would enable any policeman to "stop, search, and detain" anyone whom he "reasonably" suspected of having in his possession in the street anything stolen or unlawfully obtained and who failed to give a "satisfactory account of his possession." Locally the Bill had reached an advanced stage without much notice before the *Yorkshire Observer* suddenly opened a major "civil liberties" campaign against the "unlawful possession" clause—ten full columns and a "leader" on February 9th being a typical allocation of space; and the City Council decided at a meeting last week, by 40 votes to 30, to withdraw the objectionable clause altogether—it was already under fire in the Commons on the Bill's Second Reading. About twenty big towns (including London) and a few counties have local Acts containing a similar clause, some of them more than a century old. It is liked only by the police and those citizens whose stolen property has been recovered by means of it; the objection is, of course, that it reverses the traditional rule of proof by requiring the defendant to establish his own innocence—though the rule now carries so many exceptions as to be well on the way to becoming the exception itself. Clauses like this have been a fruitful source of litigation for many a wrongfully-arrested carrier of bag or parcel: the Judges dislike them thoroughly, and in recent years Parliament has refused to grant them to many municipalities—Lowestoft in 1920, Leeds in 1930, Doncaster in 1931, Coventry in 1936; in 1938 Blackburn had to be content with a whittled-down provision applying only to the unlawful possession of anything made of leather or metal, because the property it really sought to protect was metal fittings and belting from temporarily idle mills. It will be surprising if any local authority acquires such powers in the future—the matter is one for a general Statute or nothing. After all, the Common Law still says that "recent possession" of stolen property is evidence that the possessor stole or received it, and the police can lawfully arrest on suspicion of felony.

* * *

A very substantial employer of labour was discussing the political situation the other day. "Of course," he said, "we had difficulty settling down after the war, but the men are working very well now. Everything is going very smoothly. You understand that I am a staunch Conservative. I always have been one. But I don't like to think what would happen if the Conservatives got into power now. I really don't think that we dare swop horses in the middle of this stream."

CRITIC

PLANS FOR PAWNEES

WHEN the Lake District is declared a National Park . . . residents might be treated as a type of American Indian, dwelling by kind permission of the authorities." Rev. Eric Oliver, Vicar of Stavely, Windermere.

From the Lakeland Reservation,
Cradle of Lake tribes' tradition,
Scheduled by the Parks Commission
For protective segregation,
Comes a howl of lamentation,
Wahonomin! Wahonomin!

Scafell braves will soon be vested
As a sub-group ethnographic,
By the paleface unmolested,
Saving for the tourist traffic,
But the Lake-folk have protested,
Wahonomin! Wahonomin!

"See them in the birch-bark dwelling,
Weaving!" Cry the Parks Committee,
"Trapping, angling and canoeing,
Poker-working, daubing, selling
Souvenir and Lake School ditty!"
But the Rydal squaws are yelling
"*Nothing doing! Nothing doing!*"

Round the shores of Derwentwater,
Grasmere, Windermere and Butter—,
Where the pueblo people potter,
Lakeland's way of life pursuing,
Clad in skins of mouse and otter,
Very angrily they mutter
"*Nothing doing! Nothing doing!*"

Hear the tribes of Lakeland Counties
Screeching in the landscape sodden—
"We no like-um ways untrodden,
We no want-um live like hermits,
We no go with fishing permits,
We no show where Rydal Mount is!
Fence us not in reservations
Like the Pawnees and the Mohawks,
Like the Iroquois Six Nations,
Like the Whipsnade bears and Zoo hawks!
Very soon you hold Election,
Very soon you want-um vote-um,
Lake-tribes lodge-um strong objection,
We no stick-um Parks Trust totem!
If you make us stay at home in
Whitehall's Indian Territory,
Think-um you be plenty sorry."
Wahonomin! Wahonomin!

SAGITTARIUS

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Unfurnished flat, country vicarage [to let] . . . dog lover essential, Anglo-Catholic preferred.—Advt. in *The Times* (George A. Falk).

When a Latvian worker, —— ——, 32, was summoned at Mansfield to-day for using bad language, he asked for an interpreter because he said he knew little English.—*Nottingham Evening Post* (Cecil Beeby).

To avoid the risk of losing their street trading licences, Kensington barrow boys who are ill and unable to use their usual pitches must "report sick" to the town hall.—*Evening Standard* (H. A. Fraser).

Now, his officers say, it was becoming clear that this private was no ordinary prisoner—he was possessed of an altogether extraordinary desire not to remain in captivity.—*News of the World* (K. E. Ruge).

WRONG FRIENDS AGAIN!

IT is one of the unfortunate fallacies of Middle East politics that there is a natural affinity between the English and the Arab. This fatal and erroneous impression has arisen from something which, in fact, both have in common: the English and the Arab are essentially polite in social intercourse; they would not dream of saying to each other's face what they really thought of each other. One would have thought that, by now, Oriental and Occidental politeness would be assessed at its real value. Indeed, the Arabs have discarded old illusions. They no longer mistake the Ambassador's small talk at tea-parties for political undertakings. But on the British side there is no such evidence of realism. On the contrary, the Foreign Office is again cherishing a happy dream. It has been re-assured by renewal of friendly sentiments expressed in Cairo, Baghdad and Beirut—not to mention Amman. The Arabs are again on the side of the (British) angels. There is some justification in this claim. But it might be advisable to see which Arabs have remained faithful to their old ally.

In Egypt, there has been a crop of expressions of goodwill and desire for British help. The latest recruit of these Egyptian "Friends of Britain" is Aly Maher Pasha. He was Egypt's Prime Minister until 1940. When, however, it became known that his Minister of Defence had made a practice of passing on to the Italians all British military information confided to the Egyptian Government and all Egypt's defence plans, Aly Maher was arrested and interned until 1944. Another recruit is Hafez Ramadan Pasha, leader of the Nationalist Party, the oldest and most extreme Right-wing opposition to the British, claiming all the Berber provinces on the Red Sea for Egypt. He now wants an anti-Communist pact with Britain. This would have been an impressive conversion if this seventy-year-old played-out leader had any following left. He has not. And, for the rest, the pronouncements in favour of an Anglo-Egyptian alliance come from men who reflect the views of the Palace. As King Farouk's standing in the country is weakening, he, too, is willing to forget the hostility he had shown the British and the Allied cause during the war. This change of royal heart fits nicely into the current Foreign Office assessment of the situation in Egypt. King Farouk in the Whitehall view, is the only remaining stable political factor in Egypt. In fact, his throne and his person are both somewhat imperilled.

This Egyptian outburst of royal and extremist friendliness to Britain has taken place in conjunction with a revaluation of Egypt in the layout of Commonwealth and Anglo-American strategy. The military appreciation of Egypt which was the basis of Mr. Attlee's declaration in 1946—that Britain proposed complete withdrawal from Egypt—has been scrapped. The alternative strategic schemes of bases in Kenya and South Africa have turned out to be no substitute for the network of Middle East bases centred on Egypt. The chain of airfields comprising Habbanyah in Iraq, Mafrak in Transjordan, Fayid on the Suez Canal, Nicosia on Cyprus, Bengazi in Cyrenaica and Castel Benito and Mellaha in Tripoli provide fighter plane control and cover for the entire prospective Middle East battlefield. The "Fighter Umbrella" based on these airfields extends over the whole of Northern Persia and includes the Soviet oilfields at Baku, the whole of Turkey and the Straits, the whole of the Aegean (including Crete) and all of Greece. All the military gateways from the Soviet North can thus be effectively blocked from this chain of airfields. But they all hinge on Egypt.

The rest follows almost automatically. The military planners and the Foreign Office have returned to their by now familiar and well-worn path. If the King is in danger, the stability of the vital base in Egypt is threatened. There remains only one thing to do: the Army must take over, as it did in 1882 and 1914, in 1924, and 1939, and again in 1942. Only, last time, it had to be done because King Farouk was difficult; this time it will be because the King is in difficulties. Once again the Foreign Office and the military are at action stations preparing for the return to Cairo and Alexandria.

In this happy turn of affairs the only drawback is that the newly-discovered love for the English is confined to the Court and those politicians and pressmen most intimately connected with the Palace. The popular parties, the Wafd and the Moslem Brotherhood (which is much more of a genuine popular movement than press reports tend to show) remain hostile and threaten to meet any return of British troops with the methods which, they say, they have learned to respect: those of the Irgun in Palestine. The long-term, indefinite and undefined plans for dams in Uganda and Ethiopia will not deal with the real core of the problem—in our time, at least.

At present, all that can be said is that the least popular, least deserving and least stable element in Egyptian society is preparing to insure itself with the British for another extension of its political life.

Egypt apart, internal Arab stresses have contributed towards the development of two distinct British policies *vis-à-vis* the Arab states. This emphasised by the Phoenix-like re-emergence of Nuri Pasha as Prime Minister of Iraq. Nuri Pasha is the living embodiment of 30 years of British policy in the Middle East. In 22 of the 27 years since the first Iraqi Government was formed, Nuri Pasha has been either Commander-in-Chief, Prime Minister, Foreign Secretary, Envoy to the League of Nations, or President of the Senate. Three times he had to flee for his life and go into exile—in 1936, in 1941 and in February, 1947. Each time there was an uprising, not so much against Nuri as against the British; and each time, as direct British influence waned, Nuri had to leave the country. In 1939 the Iraq Army and British influence brought Nuri back into the Premiership; in October 1941 the British Army, after breaking the Rashid Ali uprising, restored Nuri to office; but what brought Nuri back into the Premiership last month?

At the end of last year Iraq was undergoing certain difficulties. The Exchequer was empty; oil output had dropped by half; and the balance of trade was catastrophic. The 10,000 soldiers in Palestine had received no pay for many weeks; the under-paid Government employees went unpaid. An appeal to the Egyptian Government for a loan of £3 millions had gone unanswered. There was only one hope left: an appeal to the British. The British were willing to help—on terms. They would help Iraq, but not the anti-British Coalition which had held office since last February. On January 6, without warning, Nuri was back in office.

The Arab press of Beirut, less inhibited by censorship regulations and the demands of diplomatic discretion, has been reporting the new Nuri line very fully, describing it variously as the Anglo-Iraq-Transjordan Axis, or the Iraq-Transjordan Tandem. As a first step, Nuri himself went to Amman and then sent an Iraqi mission, headed by Dr. Jamali, to Damascus and Beirut to sound the Governments there on the establishment of a new alliance of Iraq, Syria, Transjordan and Lebanon, which would in turn be closely allied to Great Britain. The main objectives of the proposed dual alliance would be to provide immediate financial aid and military assistance to rehabilitate the economics and the armies of the four States concerned, to bar the way to Communist infiltration, and to "contain" the new state of Israel within the smallest practicable frontiers. The Foreign Office was pleased with itself. It had again established a "position of influence" in the Middle East capitals.

Can it, in fact, carry on with its accustomed and well-tried, if not over-successful, policies? Perhaps, provided British military force ensures the

necessary conditions. These are, in Egypt, that, King Farouk and the present minority coalition of landowners, merchants, lawyers and politicians has to be maintained in power against growing popular unrest. The opposition must remain muzzled; trade union or Socialist activity suppressed and imprisoned; and the Moslem Brotherhood proscribed. In Iraq, power must rest on the forces provided by the British grip on the purse-strings, and by the Regent and the Prime Minister, whose political existence depends in turn on the 100-odd pro-British Sheikhs who as a result of British "land reform" have become the owners of 80 per cent of all land. It means continued hostility to the more radical town population, the minorities and the preservation of an administration which is dedicated to the preservation of existing landlords and ruling families. In Transjordan, it means increasing the King's subjects from 350,000 to over a million. The country's revenue is less than a million pounds; it has no administration and no economic means to attain real independence. Transjordan's success and solidity depends entirely on the 67-year-old King Abdullah. There is no heir of calibre to succeed the King. In Syria and the Lebanon, it also involves support for governments and policies designed primarily to ensure continued long political life for a few dozen ruling families.

There is no sign in any of these policies of any desire to see a policy of reform or development as suggested by Mr. Bevin four years ago, and by President Truman last month. There was a Middle Eastern Economic Section in the Foreign Office, but it was never allowed to come to life. Indeed, it is no injustice to the Foreign Office to say that its Middle Eastern diplomats sincerely hold that large planned development of the Arab states is American—or Zionist—sales talk and quite unreal. And, in a way, they are right. Under the political conditions and diplomatic intrigue which have been the hall-mark of their recent policy, neither reform nor plan could flourish. And in the present calculations of the military and the Foreign Office, with their political and diplomatic objectives, revolutionary reforms would be similarly unreal, though useful as window-dressing for the innocent. For British policy in the Middle East has again returned to the practice of direct intervention. What is tragic is that this is intervention on the side of the most conservative and backward elements, a policy foredoomed to defeat.

JON KIMCHE

BLOOMSBURY: 1949

LOCAL Government always seems a mundane and parochial part of our political life. The name itself conjures up a mental picture of pettifogging committees, drains, mayors struggling to look dignified in their golden chains, secondary roads and the park-keepers who seemed creatures of such awesome majesty when you were a child. Yet it has been the most important training ground for the Labour Party, from the days when Deptford's election of Sidney Webb to the L.C.C. seemed a first portent of successes to come, to the thousands of councillors who now act as the N.C.O.s in Labour's army. The Webbs and their fellow Fabians, of course, were partly responsible for this emphasis on the penny rate and school meals, but the real basis of Labour's strength to-day was laid by the men and women all over the country who steadily turned local councils into strongpoints in the fight for Parliamentary constituencies. This fight still goes on, and municipal politics, however petty they may sometimes seem, are as important in the long run as more dramatic proceedings in Westminster.

In some areas where Labour has long held a majority, the councils have settled into the routine which follows habitual success. But, where Labour has only recently won control, or has yet to win it, the record of its local representatives may be decisive in a Parliamentary contest. One such example is the Borough of Holborn, which is coming to the end of the first three years of Labour rule. Labour lost at the last General Election by a narrow majority, but won six seats more than the Tories at the borough elections which were held later that year. Now the constituency is being amalgamated with part of St. Pancras, and, whatever the result may be of this year's local contest, there is little doubt that the job that has been done by the young and virile Labour group in the Town Hall will be a great asset when the time comes to choose a new Member of Parliament.

Holborn is the smallest borough in London. Before the war about thirty thousand people lived in its 405 acres. To-day there are some twenty thousand residents, although the borough takes in more than 250,000 people every weekday, to work in shops and in offices. The Council has a double task. Naturally it must look after its residents. But it must also do what it can to make provision for the flood of workers which streams in every day. Of course there are many services which benefit both groups, and the businesses in the borough pay their share of the rates. Any council must clean the streets and collect the garbage—though it is worth noting that the Labour majority has dropped the old system of farming this work out to contractors and has set up its own direct labour force. But this Council set out with imagination to make the borough a pleasant place in which to work or to live.

In the past Holborn was dominated by the business vote—which meant that rates were to be kept down and that both council and councillors should do as little as possible. The first Labour victories came in 1935. Ten years later, rather to their surprise, a group of young and active Labour enthusiasts—their average age is not much over thirty—found themselves in charge of the borough. Their biggest and most pressing problem was housing. More than a fifth of the borough had been wrecked by bombs and a good deal of what was left was slummy and decaying. Seven Dials has not changed much really since John Gay wrote the "Beggar's Opera." By a vigorous requisitioning policy, which could well have been emulated elsewhere, the Council found more than a thousand dwelling units for former residents who were homeless. This did not liquidate the waiting list, but it was probably as much as could be done in a district which was not only blitzed but was also full of office buildings and shops. New homes were harder to get. The land in Holborn is more expensive than the L.C.C., as planning authority, likes to approve for low-rent housing sites. But Holborn got permission to buy a ruined site off Theobalds Road and to put up 162 flats as the first instalment of a larger housing scheme intended to house some four thousand people.

The first instalment may not seem large, but it compares favourably with the 92 flats built between the wars by various Tory councils. The flats, moreover, are attractively built and intelligently designed. All five blocks have lifts, large enough to hold a pram. Each family has its own lock-up space, an electric drying cabinet for washing and a share in electric washing machines placed on each floor or in the basement. There are central heating and running hot water, fitted cupboards and wardrobes, sun balconies and large windows. Other amenities, such as dust chutes and good landscaping, fill out the details. The rents, under modern conditions, are not excessive, ranging from 35*s.* 6*d.* for a four-room flat to 21*s.* 3*d.* for a single bachelor room. These rents include both rates and heating charges. This is not a skimpy post-war job: the flats are properly planned and constructed and the people who have moved into the completed block are more than content with their new homes.

While the Council did not let the inevitable difficulties obstruct its first housing project, it is still unable to get materials to build a proper canteen on the North side of Russell Square. In the meantime a mobile canteen serves light refreshments in the centre of the square every lunch hour. The main squares—Bloomsbury, Russell and Bedford—have been leased for fifty years by the Council, which has opened them to the public and put them back under grass. It also maintains a canteen and playground for children in St. Giles' Churchyard, a district without any other convenient open space. In the summer months another café is open at the Oasis, a bombed site which has been converted into an open-air swimming pool.

For the old people there is a midday club, which provides meals, a billiards room, music and other entertainments. For all citizens of the borough there is a social centre at Clark's Buildings, converted from an old police barracks, which has more than four hundred active adult members and at least one hundred boys and girls. This social centre runs the gamut from amateur dramatics to what our grandfathers called "instructive pursuits." The municipal laundry, recognising that many single people live in the borough, has set aside special nights for bachelors to bring their washing.

To meet the needs of office workers who care to spend their lunch hour profitably, there are gramophone concerts in the Town Hall, with an average attendance of two hundred, and evening concerts twice a week. The Council has stimulated the formation of a local film society, is trying to promote an orchestra and some of its members look forward to the time when Holborn will have a new municipal social centre with a proper theatre and auditorium. This project—like the idea of buying a municipal playing field not too far away from the crowded streets of Holborn—must wait on finance, building permits and, probably, another Labour victory.

Only those who suffered the old library in Holborn can appreciate what has been accomplished since 1945. It was a museum piece of musty inadequacy, which even denied its patrons access to the shelves. While there are still difficulties—a new building is really needed and arrears of book-buying cannot be made up overnight—the library service has improved so much that in three years the number of borrowers resident in the borough has jumped from 6 to 25 per cent. of its population. Issues have risen from 133,000 a year to over 600,000; the number of people using the reference section has quadrupled, and the library is now running interesting lectures and exhibitions. These improvements alone would be indictment enough of the library the Tories provided. Holborn before long will have a first-class library which, incidentally, is also to specialise in a commercial reference section, badly needed in a borough with so many business houses.

The cost of all this? Not so very much. In 1944 rates stood at 13*s.* 6*d.* Just before the election the Tories cut them to 11*s.* 8*d.* Now they are 15*s.* 6*d.*, of which 9*s.* represents the L.C.C. precept. Holborn, moreover, is one of the "giving" boroughs under the rating equalisation scheme. The general rise in costs has called for higher rates as much as any of the special projects the council has undertaken.

This, briefly, is the record. Other councils perhaps have achieved more in specific fields. But the absolute achievement matters less than the relative progress the Council has made in the face of special and difficult circumstances. This rather dingy borough, cramped and shattered, has been given new life by its mayor—a building worker who has not been overawed by the grimly respectable faces of his predecessors that decorate the Town Hall—and its energetic councillors. They have shown that good government can also be jolly government if the people are given a chance to be equal partners. There is a new spirit in modern Bloomsbury. It will get its flats, its theatre, its open-air cafés, its municipal orchestra. With this kind of leadership so much can be done. And it is fun doing it.

NORMAN MACKENZIE

DEMOCRATIC ITALY?

ITALY today has all the forms of political democracy, and a good deal of the substance as well. There is a free Parliament, with a Chamber elected by universal suffrage, and a Senate which —apart from a small non-elective element, including former Prime Ministers, distinguished intellectuals like Croce, and men who have served terms of imprisonment of five years or more for political offences under Fascism—is equally representative. There is genuine freedom of association and, as the state of the walls makes clear, of expression of political belief. The right of public meeting is safeguarded by an ingenious law, effectively invoked during the last elections by at least one Socialist Deputy. This law forces political parties which wish themselves to hold meetings to guarantee a hearing to their opponents. And crowning the edifice of this liberal, bourgeois Republic is a bourgeois President liberal contrasting sharply with the still regal splendours of his surroundings in the Quirinal.

There are even some of the forms of inter-party intercourse which one associates only with well-established liberal democracies. Political tension may be high, but Togliatti does not omit to pay a New Year's Day courtesy call on De Gasperi; and other well-known Communists, such as Terracini, the former President of the Constituent Assembly, are to be found at official dinners given by the Government. Indeed, almost the only superficial indication of the length and recentness of Mussolini's break in the Italian democratic tradition, is the excessive age of so many leading politicians of the Right and Centre. (The Left, from Saragat and Lombardo to Nenni and Togliatti, is more fortunate in this respect). After meeting Bonomi, Nitti, De Nichola and Sforza, one is no longer surprised at a suggestion that Orlando, the 89-year old veteran of Versailles, might be invited to form a Government.

This politically democratic pool is not, of course, free of ripples, nor of the threat of coming waves. Future Communist strategy is uncertain, but frequent sporadic riots continually remind the Government authorities of the form which it might take. To deal with these outbreaks and to prepare for eventualities, Scelba, the Christian Democratic Minister of the Interior, has his well-paid, well-clothed, well-fed and very large police force—substantially larger than under Mussolini, it is said. At present there is little or no evidence that the police throw their weight about, but they are certainly far from politically neutral; they might, in a deteriorating situation, easily become the very effective instruments of a Right-wing reaction.

De Gasperi is clearly anxious to preserve the liberal, Centre character of his Government. Nevertheless, the principal threat to democracy (except, of course, for the direct Communist threat) comes rather from a Christian Democratic party driven Right by increasing illegal Communist activity than from extremist Royalist and neo-Fascist groups—though these extremist groups are themselves not without strength, particularly in the Naples area.

The Church, which recently ex-communicated the leader of a Christian Socialist group in Nenni's party, is already playing a part in politics which might be regarded as undemocratic. But in the present situation in Italy it can hardly be expected to be neutral, and objections to its political activities during and since the elections are, in the main, unreasonable. What is more serious is that one of the most distinguished Italian liberal thinkers, with a strongly *laique* past, is reconciled—and there must be many like him—to "mild clerical dictatorship" as the only future alternative to Communism.

This, then, is the political face of Italy—Western liberal democracy, facing a very uncertain future. In the economic field, the picture is rather different. If freedom here be interpreted in Mr. Churchill's sense, then Italy is indeed economically free. But if it be interpreted to mean an approach to social justice, then Italy is certainly not entitled to that description. Signor Einaudi, the late Minister of Finance and present President of the Republic, who thinks of himself —somewhat paradoxically in view of his sternly deflationary record—as a disciple of Keynes, has been, and to some extent still is, the great advocate of extreme *laissez-faire;* but few of the members of the Government disagree with him. As a result, Italy has the sort of economy at which moderate British Conservatives, let alone members of the Labour Party, would shudder. Food is far from plentiful, but there is virtually no rationing, even of basic commodities. Raw material allocations are unknown; there is no effective import control, and price-fixing is unusual—the principal exception being rents, a large proportion of which are pegged at ridiculously low levels. Inevitably, in a largely uncontrolled economy, the result has been that there has been no building of working-class accommodation; and the housing need, particularly in the South, is so great that it makes the problems of even one of the worst London boroughs seem almost non-existent. Planning, in so far as it exists, is of a loose, financial nature. The banks are influenced in their granting of short-term credits by the Administration's wishes for the future shape of the national economy, and the Government Committee for Industrial Reconstruction, which plays a large part in the provision of long-term capital, takes even closer account of such considerations.

Italy, then, suffers from no excess of controls and from no lack of monetary incentives. What results has this "free" system produced? There are certainly some substantial post-war economic achievements to the credit of the Italian nation. A great deal of war damage has been repaired, a run-away inflation has been effectively checked, and an atmosphere of post-war dislocation and decay has been rapidly dispelled. But there are also items on the other side of the balance-sheet. More than two million people are unemployed, and a great number more are under-employed; and, while over-population is certainly an important factor in this problem, it is not the only factor. There is also great poverty, which Italy has always had and which no Government could have eradicated in a few brief years, but which is made to stand out more sharply by the equally obvious, if less widespread, presence of great wealth. The national budget is unbalanced, and the Italian Four-Year Plan holds out no hope of restoring equilibrium before 1952.

More serious adverse factors, perhaps, are the comparatively low level at which production is still running and the remoteness of any approach to an external trading balance. Despite substantial foreign aid, the Italian national income, adjusted for changes in the value of money, amounted in 1947 to only 83 per cent. of its 1938 level, and in the 1948-9 E.R.P. year it is not expected to rise to more than 95 per cent. of this level. Dependence on non-European sources of supply has increased sharply, and Italian imports from the non-O.E.E.C. world for 1948-9 are estimated at 138 per cent. of the 1938 volume (the comparable U.K. figure is 82 per cent.), while exports to these countries are expected to be only 72 per cent. of pre-war. The estimates for this year are markedly different from the actual performance in 1947. At least one of the causes of this position is the fact that Italian costs of production are substantially higher than British costs, and that many Italian exports, most textiles for example, are not competitive in world markets. One consequence is that Italy is applying for rather more Marshall Aid in the coming year than she has been receiving in the current year.

These considerations suggest some of the limitations to monetary incentives and uncontrolled enterprise as remedies for the post-war ills of Europe. They also suggest some of the uncertainties of Italy's future and some of the difficulties which her political leaders have to face. Not least do these difficulties confront the P.S.L.I., which, under the leadership of Signor Saragat and with the collaboration of Signor Lombardo, faces the twin dilemmas of remaining a Socialist party while forming part of a Government which does not pay even lip-service to the virtues of a planned economy, and of behaving as a working-class party while the overwhelming majority of politically and industrially active workers (except, perhaps, in the Milan area) are lined up behind the Togliatti-Nenni front.

ROY JENKINS

SO THEY SAY . . .

Cunard Red Star?

Daily Graphic, February 4:

RED REVOLT S.O.S. IN BRITISH LINER

Communist-sympathising seamen led a near-mutiny fight with officers aboard the 19,500-ton Cunard White Star liner Samaria at Le Havre docks yesterday . . .

Daily Mail, February 14:

FIGHTING IN CUNARDER

French Police Called Aboard—Battle For Gangway.

Both papers made it the main story of the day, and devoted 22 inches of space to it. Both gave, as the reason for the "revolt," the seamen's determination to attend a Communist meeting ashore. The only other paper to report the incident was the *Daily Express*, which gave it six inches—but the *Express* was also the only one of the three which printed the following statement, issued by Cunard the next day:

Due to the late hour of the Samaria's call and the brevity of her stay, it was not possible to grant the customary shore leave to any of the crew. Some of them did not understand the reason for this change and tried to go ashore. When the position was explained they resumed duties. The company understands there was never any question of the men wanting to attend Communist demonstrations or to disobey the master's orders.

* * *

Department of Outstretched Necks

Daily Mail, February 11:

"SQUANDERMANIA" . .

The Conservatives are to launch an all-out campaign against Government extravagance. It is to be fought unremittingly in Parliament and the country . . . The severity—and relish—of Churchill's first broadside yesterday fulfilled the worst fears of the wiser Socialist leaders . . .

Sunday Express, February 13:

Mr. Churchill has infuriated the Socialists by his decision to launch in Parliament this week a full-scale attack on Government extravagance with public money. It is an onslaught against which the Socialists have no defence in debate . . .

Daily Mail, February 18:

[The Tories] sat silent when the motion was called . . . Mr. Churchill did not speak in the debate.

* * *

Further Outlook . . .

The Times, February 9:

The House of Lords . . . yesterday dismissed the appeal by Cunard White Star, Limited . . . in the action arising out of the collision between H.M.S. Curacoa and the steamship Queen Mary on October 2, 1942 . . . shortly after 2 p.m. The weather was fine and clear . . .

News Chronicle, February 9:

A legal battle between the Admiralty and the Cunard White Star Line . . . was finally settled yesterday . . . The collision occurred . . . in a dense fog . . .

AUTOLYCUS

TRIOLET FOR A DIPLOMAT

Into the innocence of out-of-doors,
From faithless man I fly.
I fly from polished lies on polished floors
Into the innocence of out-of-doors.
How candid every stone along the moors,
How like a flute the sky.
Into the innocence of out-of-doors
From faithless man, I fly.

FRANCES CORNFORD

LALLANS

Gin ye're sweir it's sair tae trauchle wi Lallans : gin ye're swack an wi smeddum an wull tak tent o't there's mair here nor ye wud jalouse.

Here is a stanza :

I' the how-dumb-deid o the cauld hairst nicht
The warld like an eemis-stane
Wags i the lift ;
An my eerie memories fa'
Like a yowdendrift.

(Hugh MacDiarmid).

There are about two dozen Scottish poets writing in Lallans and finding publication in magazines. Twelve of them have published books. They are very much part of the burgeoning of "confidence, high spirits, appetite and intellect" as Eric Linklater has described the general Scottish scene.

By definition Lallans is a Germanic tongue, akin to English, spoken in Southern Scotland and on the East coast up to Buchan. It is itself broken into dialects with marked differentiation. It is Broad Scots, the Doric : it is the language of Burns and Fergusson and Ramsay and of the early Scottish poets. It is no longer "educated" speech and it is being pushed back by schools, the cinema, the B.B.C., and snobbery.

Lallans is native to Scotland and, in spite of very thorough anglicisation, no one brought up in the country can miss its impact, though he may disown it. It is still largely used in mines and farms, workshops and shipyards—sometimes no more than a vestige of words and constructions. In the remoter country it is rich and resonant, and there are still a few people who can be described as "monoglot Lallanophones." The tongue remains as a vital flavouring in the youth of the most scrupulously educated. In the bourgeois city schools, whose pupils come from homes where a word of Scots is socially more disgusting than an oath, there is a legacy of playground Lallans that passes from one generation to the next.

A conscious and developed Lallans has for a long time been unfamiliar in print. The poets using it to-day have been confronted by a public that is suspicious of their intentions. That more and more poets should turn to this difficult tongue, unrewarding in readership, appears inexplicable on the surface. If they must write, why not in English ? Is it an affectation ? Is it a sort of wilful Scottish pre-Raphaelism ? Is it important ?

Scottish writing always touches a peak in creative protest. Without a focus of attack it can become rotten with the humbug and sentimentality that is the Celt's *alter ego*. The publication of *Whistlebinkie* last century was the beginning of an age of despair in Scottish poetry. Lang and Stevenson were reminders, though little more, that there might be something else.

In the twenties, when the results of the first war drove Scotland along the road of self-examination, the new political awareness had in Hugh MacDiarmid a prophet who was a materialist, a mystic who was a Communist, an internationalist who was a pan-Celt. From the outset MacDiarmid preached the doctrine of Lallans. He insisted on it as an instrument by which the Scottish writer might discover his truest expression. He was a Gogol ; and from his overcoat pocket there sprang, in due course, a number of young poets fully armed with a language and a faith.

GLOSSARY

bydan : waiting
dayligaun : dusk
deean : dying
dwynan : vanishing
eemis-stane : insecure boulder
gar : make
hairst : harvest
how-dumb-deid : dead of night
ingyne : mind, genius
jalouse : guess, imagine
lift : sky
skaith : wrong, injury
smeddum : good sense
swack : agile, clever
sweir : lazy
tak tent : pay attention
targats : tatters
trauchle : struggle wearily
yowdendrift : flurry of snow

With one or two exceptions only the poets fully accepted the doctrine. It was really a poet's business. Grassic Gibbon was one of the exceptions, but he had never been in favour of adopting a full canon of Lallans in prose. Gibbon took his native North-eastern dialect, broke it to pieces and put it together again in a modified way. He was less interested in the literal preservation of syntax and unfamiliar expressions than in using the Lallans constructions and rhythms to effect subtle shades of reality—the reality of his peasant folk—of which English was incapable. The result was *Sunset Song*, *Cloud Howe* and *Grey Granite*—a trilogy of which the first two books are amongst the important publications in English this century.

Poetry held closer to the pure æsthetic. Some of the poets wrote for the obvious enjoyment they got out of it, and there is little more to recommend them. Some had the idea they were helping at the birth of a new and comprehensive Lallans literature. Most of the arguments they had to counter were at fault in pre-judging a literature that might never exist and in mistaking Lallans poetry as a peripheral phenomenon of English letters.

The Lallans movement must be seen in terms of a comprehensive social philosophy, not as an assortment of individuals acting the dilettante with archaisms and parochialisms. The academic critic, more familiar with Lallans as the alternative to Middle English in which Henryson and Dunbar are decently embalmed, is rarely concerned with the living moment in which Lallans is a fermenting yeast.

In his book *Lucky Poet*, MacDiarmid writes of a "poetry of fact." Elsewhere he says :

To hell wi' happiness !
I sing the terrifying discipline
O' the free mind that gars a man
Mak his joys kill his joys.

Seen within a national politico-cultural revival the explanation of Lallans becomes easier. The poetry has its place in the present Scottish scene of landlordism, the drift of population, the old Independent Labour Party, the new activity in theatre and studio. It is a poetry of assessment and protest and hope. It illuminates Christopher Caudwell's phrase : "the phantasy of poetry is a social image."

In this dialectical way we come to the Scottish poet using Lallans as a blind man uses his fingers to contact reality. He is usually a nationalist, in its sense of Scottish independence. Naomi Mitchison recently pointed out that he is usually a Socialist. There has naturally been a rejection of contemporary English poetry. Semantically, Lallans is fresh and vigorous after the worn coinage of journalese and officialese. Magazines such as the *Scots Review*, the *Voice of Scotland*, and the *National Weekly*, have emphasised the native reality of Lallans as a counter-blast to the decadence of English writing. With most of the writers there is a personal refutation of the dazed determinism of the South, hugging a ruined imperialism. No one asks an Audenesque pardon for every flabby fancy.

Since Lallans is not an end in itself, but a means to a new awareness, not much need be demanded of it as poetry. Yet, beyond balladry and lyrics, there is poetry in it. MacDiarmid himself, Sydney Goodsir Smith, Robert Garioch, have made of it a vehicle that can carry superlative work.

Those outside the Lallans movement and most interested in it are the Gaelic poets. There is an easy give-and-take between the Gaelic and Lowland parts of Scotland. The sharp division of the so-called Highland Line is an imaginary boundary. The Celtic feeling has penetrated deeply into the cities and also into the Lowland country. It is quite natural that a sympathy, not only of aim, but of expression should exist between modern Gaelic and Lowland poets. The common background is the unit of Scotland. Two eminent Gaelic poets are Somhairle Maclean who has been translated into English and Lallans, and George Campbell Hay, a man of extreme brilliance, who writes in Gaelic, Lallans and English.

The Lallans movement is at present re-shaping itself. The group called the Makars did a great deal of spade-work in evolving a full canon of Lallans and in standardising the spelling. In their creative work they were mainly traditionalists. The shift is now to the Clyde where a new group of poets is making itself known, more directly in touch with the Scottish people and less concerned with fine arguments on the structure of Lallans poetry. This shift to the proletariat is paralleled by the waning of the middle-class National Party as an effective political organisation. The new Clyde Group of poets (and painters) aims to "produce an art which will spring excitingly from the life of the Scottish people"—a brash proclamation which would embarrass Bloomsbury and has no relation to mourning by an unquiet grave.

In contrast to the somewhat scholarly poetry of the Makars, a people's poetry is arising in the West, striving for expression out of the reality of living, aware of "the flower and iron of the truth." Here is John Kincaid on his native city in *Setterday Nicht Symphonie :*

Ay, birl awa citie, mak a gob at the mune,
fling a haunfu o stars at the heids o the priests,
tak the Clyde i your airms. . .

This is a strong, confident life rising from the debris of industrialism. The move to the Clyde is dialectically exact, and the ivory castles of the *Briar Bush*, *Peter Pan*, and Fiona Macleod are being demolished and obliterated.

The eternal Celt remains, mourning and striving, part of yet apart from the new vigour. Sydney Goodsir Smith expresses it so in his book *Under the Eildon Tree :*

Sae it has come til this in the end—
A barren strand, a skaith, a man bydan at dayligaun
Wi's hert in targats, onwytan a boat's retour ;
Aa his dwynan ingyne bound up and concentrate
Aince mair on the outcome o a deean chance.

NEIL MCCALLUM.

The Arts and Entertainment

NEW STRAVINSKY

THE two latest works of Igor Stravinsky, of which M. Ansermet conducted several performances last week for the B.B.C., have one thing in common : neither of them belongs to the concert-hall, or even to the broadcasting studio, and both suffer to some extent from the conditions of concert performance. *Orpheus* is a ballet; and the new Mass is ill-suited to secular occasions. Whether it is strictly liturgical, I am not ritualist enough to say, but I get the impression that it was at any rate intended to be so; and what effect these austere, submissive, archaic strains can have made in the opulent frame of La Scala (where the work had its first performance last October) it is difficult to conceive.

The music avoids all opportunity for display. It is laid out for modest forces : mixed chorus, of which the two upper parts should be sung by children's voices (but weren't); a few brief solo passages ("preferably solo" is all the composer indicates); and an accompaniment described as "Double Wind Quintet," which means five wood-wind and five brass. The entire text of the Mass is got through in 17 minutes, from which it can be guessed that there is no emotional dwelling on those salient phrases which have moved composers for hundreds of years. A striking example of this is the treatment of the Creed : if a listener failed to catch the words, he would be hard put to it to tell the "Crucifixus" passage from the "Et resurrexit"; indeed, the setting of

"Et in unam sanctam catholicam et apostolicam Ecclesiam" is note-for-note identical with that of "Et expecto resurrectionem mortuorum." At first glance, we may be reminded of the *Oedipus Rex*, in which Stravinsky asked his librettists (I quote from Adolfo Salazar's recently published *Music in Our Time*) "to present the Latin text in such a way that the words should have value exclusively as sounds, independent of their emotional content"; (we also find, by the way, as in *Oedipus*, examples of incorrect Latin scansion). But such an intention, applied to the text of the Mass, would presumably be heretical; and in performance the effect of this emotionally neutral attitude towards the words is rather one of rigid submission to the simplicies of old usage: in fact, to the tradition of Gregorian chant, which is one of the two predominating elements in the vocal writing of this Mass. The other is a flowing, serene, beautifully spaced-out four-part writing, modelled after sixteenth-century polyphony, but not always polyphonic, and much modified, of course, by Stravinsky's usual extreme, though curiously bland, diatonic dissonances. His handling of this style is masterly; for instance, in the beatific "Amen" which falls like a ray of light upon the last bars of the otherwise sternly monotonous Creed.

These bars are unaccompanied; but for most of the Mass wood-wind and brass join their voices to the human choir. The role played by the instruments is often parallel rather than subordinate. The more gentle and "modern" timbres of flute, clarinet and horn are excluded; and there is something stiff, archaic, hieratic in the solemn —to modern ears almost gauche—interjections of oboe, trumpet and trombone, which pursue their independent path, as though from another transept. All this might sound strangely impressive if liturgically performed in a Romanesque church, where it would harmonise with the sculpture of tympanum and capital, and seem like a revivification of the twelfth-century spirit in modern terms; heard coldly over the air, much of the music seemed altogether too flat, featureless and self-effacing to quicken the interest. I must add that the extremely concentrated nature of the style does produce moments of great beauty; one of these comes at the very end, where the words "Dona nobis pacem" are uttered (just once) in a resigned, sinking cadence; one voice only, the tenor, dares to raise his note by a semitone on the final syllable, as though fearfully looking upwards; and this note is taken up by a trombone to introduce two *pianissimo* bars for brass, and two more for the wind, which float up and die away with an effect neither of hope nor despair, but—once again—of serenity and submission.

Orpheus is scored for an orchestra of normal classical size, but the dynamics are so restrained and the texture so transparent that the effect is nearer to that of a chamber orchestra. It is full of the marks of Stravinsky's most recent style: the long-maintained rhythmic patterns, the chug-chug accompaniments of repeated notes, the preliminary pawings of the ground in rapidly alternating semitones before a lyrical melody can take wing. The episodes of the story of Orpheus pass rapidly before us, like the successive parts of a classical frieze in a lantern lecture; without the help of stage movement, the effect of each brief scene is curiously static, the music often beautiful, sometimes dull, seldom evocative; always cool, collected and contained. Apollo has certainly triumphed over Dionysus, as Stravinsky intended (for a discussion of that turning-point in the composer's career, see E. W. White's very useful book on Stravinsky, published by *John Lehmann*). But we are impelled to wonder, not for the first time, whether the cost of the austere Apollonian discipline has not been too high; for instance, ought both Furies and Bacchantes to sound as if they would be quite at home at Girton? What enchants the listener is nearly always the static or purely decorative scenes, such as the opening lament of Orpheus or the Bach-like arioso of his appeal in the underworld. The dramatic moments are left to shift for themselves, or perhaps one should say are left to the choreographer, as when the loss of Eurydice is disposed of in a bar of *crescendo*, followed by a bar of silence! Classical restraint, yes, of course; but how much was there to restrain? Stravinsky once quoted, with high approval, André Gide's remark that "a classical work is beautiful by virtue of its subjugated romanticism." "The implication of this aphorism," he pointed out, "is the need for subjugation," to which we must surely add, the presence of some human emotion powerful enough to need the yoke. Is the emotion behind this *Orpheus* truly classical, as in Gluck, or only nostalgic and Alexandrine? It may be easier to decide when we see the work where it belongs: in the theatre.

DESMOND SHAWE-TAYLOR

FURTHER EDUCATION
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RADIO NOTES

COURAGE is to be praised wherever it may be found, and the planners of the Light Programme are to be warmly applauded for their courage in devoting the peak listening hour on Saturday evening to *Letcombe Bassett: The Future of a Village*, the broadcast of a parish meeting in a tiny village on the Berkshire Downs which may shortly be legislated out of existence. The programme—and doubtless this was the aim—focused the attention on the future of the smaller villages and hamlets of the country in the sharpest possible way. I do not think it would be possible from this broadcast alone to decide on the merits of the case for and against the removal of this particular village, but it made a lively and curiously intimate programme. The subject was important—a traditional way of life was in danger; the speeches and discussion were spirited. I was particularly impressed by the balanced approach of Mr. Thomas Sharp, who spoke as an authority on town planning and had the courage to describe the village as a rural slum. Mr. Betjeman, who followed him, and who was both funny and unfair, revealed a hitherto unsuspected talent for demagogy of a high order. The speeches of the villagers were deeply felt and to the point. The programme's strength lay in its unaffectedness, in the fact that it was presented simply as a broadcast of a parish meeting without any attempt to dress it up and "featurise" it. We could do with more programmes of this kind, in which ordinary citizens are allowed to speak for themselves. I wonder, have the proceedings of a trades union branch meeting, when a wages claim is being discussed, for instance, ever been broadcast?

It is an ironical reflection on radio writers and producers that pure radio is the rarest thing we ever hear on the air; since it was precisely that that Mr. MacNeice gave us I listened to the new production of his play *He Had a Date* with especial pleasure. If one were to read it, I think one would find *He Had a Date* pretty thin; it would appear, I suspect, as not much more than a generalised account of a young intellectual who discovered the existence of the workers at the time of the General Strike, declassed himself and attempted to join the proletariat, fought in Spain and was killed while in the Navy during the war. How many earnest and humourless novels of the late Thirties does it not recall. Yet, broadcast, it is exciting in the extreme; muddled, inconsistent, selfish, Mr. MacNeice's hero does appear

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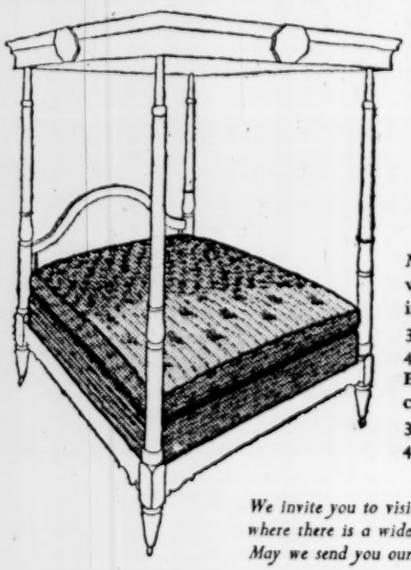

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THE PERFECT DRYSHAVER

R491

almost in the Lermontov sense as a hero of our time; the play, with its skilful use of popular songs to establish period and mood, becomes something of a left-wing *Cavalcade*. It was the more interesting because here Mr. MacNeice deliberately eschews the help of poetry; he depends entirely on clean, sharp dialogue and on his unrivalled sense of timing and effects. The play moves from one brilliant vignette of sound to another; inside a minute, for instance, Mr. MacNeice catches absolutely the very feel and smell of a provincial newspaper office. Incidentally, the play brought home the B.B.C.'s and especially the Third Programme's inadequacy in presenting contemporary life in terms of fiction; since the beginning of the Third I do not recall any serious attempt, apart from this single play of Mr. MacNeice's, written as long ago as 1944, to depict our times with any degree of comprehensiveness. The fault is, of course, by no means entirely the B.B.C.'s. In spite of the progress that has been made, imaginative writers generally have still to take radio seriously as a medium. Meanwhile, pastiche and reminiscence, admirable though they often are, have become the curse of radio-writing.

The Third Programme *Romeo and Juliet* was most disappointing. It was abominably slow and, apart from Mr. Marius Goring, whose Mercutio was excellent, a triumph of miscasting. Miss Celia Johnson acted to perfection the part of an experienced woman who knew exactly what she wanted and was bent on getting it; it follows that she failed completely to suggest Juliet. Mr. Robert Eddison played Romeo as Hamlet. If the production was a tragedy, it was certainly not the one Shakespeare intended. WILLIAM SALTER

THE MOVIES

"The Treasure of Sierra Madre," at Warners

"Un Americano in Vacanza," and "Carmen," at the Continentale

"The Loves of Carmen," at the Odeon

The cinema, which has always had a weakness for gold-diggers, male or female, returns to them this week at inordinate length. Male variety; so three men set out for the Mexican hills, and an eternal triangle is played out among cactus and rock, bandits and donkeys. One is the garrulous old campaigner (Walter Huston), holding the scales and content with small findings; the second (Humphrey Bogart) develops persecution mania and will rob or murder his companions when the chance comes; the third (Tim Holt) preserves honour untarnished, and in the beard-growing days can sport a pretty face-trimming against the others' convict stubble. We know the situation, in fact, well enough to be sure that it's Mr. Bogart who will be left to the buzzards: a Mr. Bogart who is certain to bare his teeth and snarl "My pal!" from memories of an earlier film. The audience at Warners, by the way, found his persecution mania growing comic rather than tense; and I think they were quite right. *The Treasure of Sierra Madre* fatally lacks tension, it moves from incident to incident without any internal growth, and that is why the whole piece seems slow and somehow pointless.

But in parts it can be very good indeed. The casual beginnings in Tampico, before the triangle has been fixed, have a conviction promise: both Mr. Bogart and Mr. Huston sail with a brisk realism into view, but it's a breeze that dies down, though with extraordinary skill Mr. Huston contrives to keep an illusion of life to the end. One later episode, when the three Mexicans wheedle and threaten their exhausted victim and then return to the village to be shot, has been quite brilliantly achieved. If only the whole piece had been kept to that level! But alas, it has been half-spoilt by the nickel-plated sentiment that drags down so many post-war Hollywood endeavours. Like *The Best Years of Our Lives* it mistakes bigness for grandeur, and its toughness suffers strange lapses. Still, this is so nearly a fine film that I would not persuade anyone to miss it.

The Continentale in Tottenham Court Road, where audiences were recently enjoying *La Femme du Boulanger* and *Farrebique*, offers another bulky and well-varied programme. Both Luigi Zampa's *Un Americano in Vacanza* (1946) and Christian Jacques' *Carmen* (1942) will be new to English audiences. The first is a slight enough affair which sets the irresistible charm of Valentina Cortese against a background of ruins, reconstruction, our American allies, and a week's sightseeing in Rome. A country mouse of a schoolmistress takes the lorry for Rome, there to deliver a father's message to his spiv son and invoke the church's influence over stone, brick and mortar. Two Americans in a jeep follow her along colonnaded squares, the jeep becomes a nag-drawn carriage, a love affair sprouts tentatively to whispers across echoing cupolas, views over and round the city, and misunderstandings at the local trotting races. The Pope parades his blessings for our benefit and what was later to develop into Marshall Aid comes in for a resounding puff. The complications and the spiritual rearmament are, in fact, rather tedious; the film drags badly in the middle; and what a pity this is, for the lovers and the town itself have a charm that has hardly been known on a screen since the days of Clair's *Quatorze Juillet*. Despite its faults, I would gladly see *Un Americano in Vacanza* again for the sake of its tree-shaded roads, casual encounters, Roman sights, fat men cutting into melons at the races, and a heroine whose liveliness survives even her progress as an angel of light.

Lastly, two Carmens. Christian Jacques' at least triumphs noisily and picturesquely in the rather fruity tradition of handsome hussars, fortune-telling, bull-fighting, and the Carmen with mysterious longings, that has sponged on Prosper Merimée's hard little tale. This version has the advantage of Bizet's music and the disadvantage of English sub-titles that make the hills "alive with cops"; and Mlle Viviane Romance at least unconventionally looks and acts the part. Miss Rita Hayworth in *The Loves of Carmen* doesn't even try. Carroty-haired and pink-cheeked, a programme-seller to the fingertips, she might be the Chantrey Bequest painter's dream girl (Merimée's wolf-eyed gipsy!), and her bandit looks most of the time like a puzzled theological student. A fitting climax is reached when, to the roar of the adjacent bull-ring, she is stabbed by him, and at the same moment he is shot by a sniping guard, so that they expire in one another's arms. Mr. Bob Hope would have fitted well into these adventures.

WILLIAM WHITEBAIT

Ballets de Paris de Roland Petit, Princes Theatre

With the exception of the pas de deux from *Casse Noisette* (well danced by Vyroubova and Skouratoff), this programme of three ballets is entirely the work of Roland Petit; but his invention cannot sustain a full evening. At best the level is that of the pre-war Cochran revues—a comparison not meant disparagingly; but the essence of the revue sketches is brevity. The two comic ballets, *Que le Diable l'emporte* and *L'oeuf à la Coque*, are over-funny, choked with whimsical mannerisms, soon tedious, ultimately aggravating. This constantly pumped-up funniness, these fake high spirits inevitably pall; one longs for a little serious relief from the archness,

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the tricks and the fidget. (Compare the light and shade of Ashton's comedy in *Cinderella* or *Facade*.) At times shafts of the old charm, the feeling for style break through, only momentarily, never memorably. From the comic bustle emerges one successful ballet, *Les Demoiselles de la Nuit*, set against a background of prettified tragedy. It is a fable by Anouilh about the cat-girl won back to humanity by a young man's love, and it provides many passages of delightful dancing from Petit and Collete Marchand. But even this is spoilt by two appallingly designed sets and by a sort of conga chain at the end. What has happened? Three years ago no young dancer or choreographer seemed more promising. Particularly in *Les Forains*, he and the *Ballets des Champs Elysées* showed originality, even brilliance. Recently there has been a break. Petit has left the salutary, if erratic, guidance of Boris Kochno to set up on his own. If only he would come under a hand as wise and firm as that of Miss de Valois at Sadler's Wells.

Correspondence

DEAD MEN'S MONEYS

SIR,—Your interesting article raises an issue of significance to a multitude of voluntary organizations. The New Education Fellowship, which you cite, is faced with an urgent programme of development that coincides with diminished finances, due to the prevailing economic situation, accentuated (inasmuch as the Fellowship is active in 26 countries) by the difficulty of money being transmitted from overseas.

It has to be remembered that the redistribution of income, nationally, presents to voluntary bodies problems that involve drastic reorganisation and planning. The following statistics of individual incomes speak for themselves:—

Income range after payment of Income Tax	*1938-39*	*1945-46*
£250 to £500	1,820,000	5,225,000
£6,000 and over ..	7,000	45

As your article brings out, much money is lying dormant and unclaimed. There would appear to be a strong case for some, at least, being freed and used for constructive social and educational purposes. Take, for instance, intestacies where there is absence of near relatives. In Sweden there was established in 1928 a General Inheritance Fund, into which such moneys are paid annually and used for social purposes. In 1944-45 a sum of 1¼ million kronor (£86,000) was spent, as follows:—

Summer colonies for children ..	506,000	Kr.
Children's homes	247,000	„
Nurseries, infant welfare centres and schools	229,000	„
Professional studies and training	142,000	„
Convalescent and other homes for young people	116,000	„
Large families	5,000	„

For the same year, similar intestacies in this country amounted to £149,000.

It is to be hoped that effective steps to free dormant moneys in the hands of obsolete charities will be taken following the forthcoming debate in the House of Lords. The motion standing on the Order Paper in the name of Viscount Samuel is to call attention to the importance of encouraging voluntary action for social welfare. A necessary preliminary would be action by the Government to bring to light the full facts regarding the 86,000 charities recorded by the Charity Commission and the Ministry of Education, to which figure must be added the unknown number that, owing to the loose nature of existing legislation, are not recorded.

How, in the meantime, are the voluntary bodies to be enabled to carry on? In the field of educational foundations there is much that can usefully be done under the Endowed Schools Acts, as extended by Section 2 of the Education (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act, 1948. The Ministry of Education has power to take the initiative, and will no doubt do so, provided it is assured of the support of public opinion.

GUY W. KEELING,
Joint Secretary

New Education Fellowship,
1 Park Crescent, W.1.

CZECH RADIOS

SIR,—I should like to amplify Mr. Percy Cudlipp's comment in your issue of February 12, on Critic's remarks about the reported planned confiscation of Czechoslovak private radio sets. On January 18, Robert Bauer, broadcasting at 23.10 hours in the "Voice of America" programme said:—

> I want to refer to the announcement of the Czechoslovak Ministry of the Interior, in which it was stated that private radio sets were going to be replaced by loudspeaker systems on the Soviet model.

This was not denied by the Czechoslovak Government. On January 23, the *Wiener Tageszeitung*, the official organ of the Volkspartei, the senior partner in the present Austrian Coalition Government, similarly referred in a message from Prague to this alleged statement by the Minister of the Interior. No denial of this has ever been issued by the Czechoslovak authorities in Vienna. As the *Daily Herald* correspondent in Prague was expelled months ago by the Czechoslovak Government, it is not possible to query him on this alleged statement, repeated (without official denial) in two authoritative quarters. I could not, therefore, do less than transmit it, giving the *Wiener Tageszeitung* as my authority. Only when this statement was published (for the third time) in the *Daily Herald* was a *démenti* issued, but only by the Czech Legation in London. My attention has since been called to the fact that *East Europe* published on February 3 a statement (source unspecified) that "On January 20 it was announced that all radio sets would have to be turned over to the [Czechoslovak] authorities."

I am now satisfied that no such public announcement was ever made by the Czechoslovak Ministry of the Interior. This fact makes it all the more curious that there was no previous denial of the allegations to the contrary made by the "Voice of America" on January 18, and by the *Wiener Tageszeitung* of January 23. It is also curious that there has been no attack on my *Daily Herald* message in the Communist Press of Czechoslovakia such as has been made by THE NEW STATESMAN AND NATION and the *Daily Worker*, and no *démenti*.

One reason for this curious diffidence at home, I suggest, may lie in the fact that everyone in Czechoslovakia knows that it has for some time been a regular procedure for police to call at the residences of former Social-democrats and others whose devotion to Communism is suspect, and confiscate their radios without explanation. You, Sir, should not find it more difficult than I have done to get officials of the present régime in Czechoslovakia to admit this fact and also that this régime is extremely worried about the eagerness of the average Czechoslovak citizen to hear the voice of the West. Hence, of course, the public statement some time ago by the Minister of Information, Kopecky, that he was going to enforce two prices for radio sets, one for the "workers" (read "trusted Communists") and one for others "in order," Kopecky said, "to make listening to London more expensive." As my original message suggested, listening in to broadcasts is the last remaining contact with the Western world open to Czechoslovak citizens.

It seems to me not improbable that the "Voice of America" got hold of a secret instruction rather than a public announcement of the Minister of the Interior, and incorrectly widened its scope.

Vienna. G. E. R. GEDYE

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There's a time for rhetoric and a time for simple statement. TI, if they liked, might describe their manifold production processes in terms to make a pageant seem prosaic. They would rather tell you that their direct exports for 1947-8 amounted to over £10,000,000; that, if indirect exports are included, they made £1 out of every £100 won by the whole country in overseas markets. Every £1 earned that way is worth a cwt. of orchestral accompaniment.

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SIR,—In your current issue Dr. Kavan, on behalf of the Czechoslovak Embassy, complains that events in Czechoslovakia are reported in the *Daily Telegraph* and the *Daily Herald* from Vienna. He says nothing of the attempts made by both these papers to obtain visas for correspondents to visit Prague.

Last year three *Daily Telegraph* correspondents were either expelled from Czechoslovakia or refused entry visas without any reason being assigned. In my own case, I applied for a visa to report the Czechoslovak elections that were held at the end of May. After a five-week delay, during which I was informed that the authorities in Prague had "lost my application," I was informed that I would not be granted a visa. No reason was given for this decision. It was also too late, by this time, for my paper to get anyone else in to report the elections.

Mr. G. E. R. Gedye, I believe, can tell much the same story with regard to his own experiences as *Daily Herald* correspondent. There is also the case of Mr. Karl Robson, *News Chronicle* correspondent, who was expelled from Czechoslovakia shortly before the election.

If Dr. Kavan will use his influence to facilitate the granting of visas to British correspondents I am sure that the *Daily Telegraph*, *Daily Herald* and other British papers will be glad to take full advantage of the opportunity. CHRISTOPHER BUCKLEY

Daily Telegraph.

"JUSTICE OR REVENGE?"

SIR,—A leading Hamburg paper, the *Allgemeine Zeitung*, published on January 21 an article by Major-General J. F. C. Fuller (a retired officer whose views are well known in England), dealing with the Nuremberg trials, under the heading "Justice or Revenge?" In this article he dwells on Biblical examples of Jehovah-inspired revenge; he refers to the making of lampshades from human skin as "not very original," since the Americans had made razor-strops from the skin of a Red Indian chief they killed in 1813; and he states that the worst war crime is to lose a war. A Hamburg friend tells me that this mischievous article has caused astonishment and dismay among those Germans who suffered under the Nazi régime; they cannot understand why a high-ranking British officer should have been permitted to publish such views in a German paper and why, if the article appeared without the knowledge of the British authorities, immediate action was not taken against the Editor of the paper. Many people in England will share their indignation and demand a full investigation. GEORGE KAMM

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Beaufort St., Chelsea, S.W.3.

THE FILM CRISIS AND THE INDEPENDENTS

SIR,—My sympathies are with Mr. Frank Launder and other would-be independent film producers, and any criticisms I may make of his views are intended to be in a constructive spirit. He is right in a number of instances, but I feel that the reasons he gives are often wrong. He complains quite justly that the producer, who takes a certain amount of risk each time he embarks on making a film, only obtains something in the region of 1½d out of each 1s paid at the box-office, and he contrasts this with the comparatively light problems of the exhibitor. But Mr. Launder omits to mention the cut taken by the renter, whose expenses are very low.

Further, it is wrong to say that the American companies can only take £4,000,000 a year out of Britain, because the more money made by British films in the U.S.A. the more the Americans can take out over and above this figure. It is quite true that they can afford to undercut British pictures, but they could do this long before the present arrangement was fixed. The U.S. home market is vastly greater than ours, and it shows American pictures almost exclusively; so the cost of production can easily be met out of domestic showings, and takings from markets in Britain, the Continent and elsewhere are almost pure profit (apart from the usual "heavy responsibilities" that business men invariably claim to be their lot!).

While it is true that the small cinema circuits and the independent exhibitors in Britain are obtaining quota concessions, and while the major circuits are on the other hand showing the full 45 per cent of British first feature films, both are using re-issues, which, because of imperfections in the Quota Act, are allowed to oust new British films.

Clearly, the independent producer is not the only sufferer in the present crisis. Indeed, it is the technicians, craftsmen and manual workers in the film production industry who, as always, carry the chief burden. Within the last three months two thousand workers have been thrown on the scrap-heap, so there is little wonder that Mr. Harold Wilson's repeated statement that the industry must first put its house in order is regarded as unrealistic.

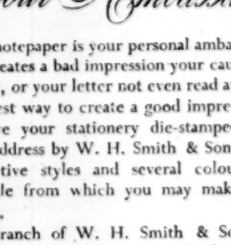
But by far the most serious shortcoming in the present Quota Act is due to the fact that Mr. Wilson saw fit to drop the Renters' Quota, whereby the renter had to distribute a certain percentage of British films; thus it was that until a few months ago the American renters in this country were forced to make British pictures themselves. Now, however, neither American nor British renters nor anybody else is obliged to make films here. The only possible inducement is the bad old one—the profit motive—and the capitalist system in Britain seems to have so developed that to make a profit out of film production is difficult, especially for the independent who has no money-making cinema chain nor distribution organisation to compensate him for possible production losses. CHRISTOPHER BRUNEL

DIVIDED IRELAND

SIR,—Those of us familiar with Mr. Hugh Shearman's utterances as semi-official historian and propagandist to the Ulster Unionist Party rubbed our eyes in astonishment at his appearance in your columns in the garb of a robust Social-democrat and at the picture of the party of Carson, Craigavon, and Sir Basil Brooke as a group of earnest Fabians.

I have no axe to grind on behalf of the successive governments of Eire and I freely admit that they have in many respects failed to grapple seriously with the social and economic problems of the country. It must be remembered, however, that it is only since the 1931 depression that the problems of investment policy and full employment in a free society have been thoroughly investigated and only since the war that techniques of dealing with them worked out. Apart from this, however, Mr. Shearman's contrast of a progressive, egalitarian, welfare economy in Ulster with a stagnant, semi-feudal, low-income society in Eire is very wide of the mark. In fact, wages in most trades are higher in Dublin than in Belfast; and, although it is difficult to compare the costs of living because of the smaller degree of rationing in Eire, most people with experience of both will agree that there is not much difference between them. As regards social services, it may be pointed out that in Eire an unemployed man receives 22s. 6d. per week; to gain this benefit he pays, when employed, 1s. 6d. In the North, in the same circumstances, he gets 26s., for which his contribution is 4s. 11d. Of course the Northerner has also his higher pension and his National Health Service, but it may be doubted if they are worth the extra 3s. 5d. a week. Anyhow the British National Insurance scheme, designed primarily for an industrial society and applied unthinkingly to the very different conditions in Ulster, does not seem to be working very well as far as the rural community is concerned. So far the farmers have mostly refused to stamp cards as self-employed persons.

Mr. Shearman says the Ulster worker does not want his housing programme cut to a quarter. As regards some areas in Ulster it would not make any difference; a quarter of nothing is still nothing. One rural council in Fermanagh has not built any houses for 25 years. The Ulster building figures are certainly nothing to brag about.



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I could easily go on to show that Mr. Shearman's treatment of other subjects, such as the trade balances of the two parts of the country, is equally misleading. A few words can give a wrong impression which it would take a paragraph to correct and your space is not unlimited. A word about censorship, however. The censorship in Eire is certainly deplorable; but at least there is no censorship of private correspondence and telephone conversations as there is in Ulster.

There is, however, small satisfaction in a litany of *tu quoques*. There is, in fact, much to be remedied in the economies North and South of the border; I write simply to refute Mr. Shearman's charge that all the black spots are in the South. The fact that these problems have not been tackled with sufficient resolution is in no small measure due to the sterilising effect of the Border controversy on normal political life on both sides of it. The Border drains away the constructive energy that should be directed to the rectifying of social evils, and while it remains will continue to do so. MAURICE IRVINE

Belfast.

THE COTTON INDUSTRY

SIR,—Andrew Hargrave, in his admirable article "The Cloud in the Lancashire Sky," has certainly done a little to dispel my gloom, for I was under the impression that only members of my Association (A.S.S.E.T.) were aware of the gloom over the Lancashire Mills.

He makes a grievous error, however, by supposing that the employers are showing signs of becoming more co-operative. Ask any supervisor, technician or manager in the cotton mills whether this is so. They will tell you in unmistakable, if unprintable, language that the pre-war devastation of the industry taught the employers nothing; they are as ever they were.

The introduction of the "pilot schools" serves as an illustration. On applying for representation on these "schools" on behalf of over 2,000 technicians and managers employed in the industry, we are informed by the Cotton Board that they cannot afford us representation because the Federation of Master Cotton Spinners' Associations Ltd., who have not afforded official recognition to A.S.S.E.T., might object. Shades of Hitler! It is coming to a sorry pass when the paid specialists of the industry are not required because of problematical objection by the employers. What are they afraid of? Could it be that these technicians and managers might dispel a little of the gloom by bringing the old-fashioned methods into the daylight?

Your correspondent mentions re-equipment, redeployment and new incentives. Now here is the right field for the technician and manager, you might say; but, if so, you would reckon without the employers. A case can be quoted of one manager who had plans to alter machines and layout at practically no cost other than converting old machinery, and had it not been for the boiler breaking down, with the result that the mill was closed and workers stood off, the alterations would never have been effected. The result—over 50 per cent increase in production at the cost of a few conversions.

Then what of redeployment? This is surely the field for the supervisor. Does he not have to train these new workers to the industry? But he is the last person to be consulted. The same is true of incentives. Members of A.S.S.E.T. have endeavoured to put many admirable schemes forward, but the employers are just not interested.

No, Mr. Hargrave, there is no sign of co-operation and I do not believe there will be any until there is a threat of nationalisation, and then they may well be prepared to co-operate with anyone they can.

HARRY G. KNIGHT,
General Secretary A.S.S.E.T.

LIBERTY IN GREECE

SIR,—Sometime ago you were kind enough to publish a letter of mine about conditions in Greece with particular reference to the banning of the NEW STATESMAN AND NATION and other reading matter in the Makronisi concentration camp.

Those of your readers who may remember the letter will, I am sure, be glad to know that this ban has now been lifted.

I am very grateful to your paper for having given me the opportunity to draw attention to what is happening in Greece and especially to the persecution of our former allies. I am convinced that, if only this were fully realised here and if the measure of our responsibility were understood, public opinion would compel our Government to intervene and secure the cessation of political executions and the abolition of the concentration camps. There can be little doubt, I think, that such intervention would prove effective. MARION PASCOE

GOVERNMENT BEER

SIR,—"Brewing Chemist" is wrong in stating that the price of mild ale in London is 1s. 2d. a pint. The usual public bar price throughout the London area is 1s. 1d., as anyone can find for himself. The strength of London mild is generally equal to that of Carlisle mild and in some cases is greater, although the price is no higher.

As regards London bitter, the strength varies between 1034 deg. and 1048 deg. and the price correspondingly between 1s. 3d. and 1s. 8d. The value given in London therefore is as good as or better than that given in Carlisle, where according to "Brewing Chemist" the price is 1s. 4d. and the strength 1038 deg. (a figure incidentally which other analyses do not confirm).

A similar claim can be made in respect of beer sold in the country as a whole. A recent survey showed that the average selling price of draught beer in 475 licensed houses in 172 towns selected at random is 13.49d. per pint. The present average selling price of Carlisle beer, as calculated from the Home Secretary's recent statement in the House of Commons, appears to be about 13.8d. per pint. C. L. SHAW

The Brewers' Society, *Public Relations Officer.*
42, Portman Square, London, W.1.

SHAKESPEARE'S CHURCH

SIR,—As a biographer of Shakespeare and eager student of all Shakespeare legends, I was much interested by Mr. Garwood's claim that Shakespeare "always attended" St. Mary's, Aldermanbury, when he was in London, with Heminge and Condell. As Shakespeare is frequently claimed as a Catholic and may have been a sceptic, it is really important to have definite proof that he was a regular attender of the Reformed English Church. Has Mr. Garwood discovered any documentary evidence or contemporary allusion which makes Shakespeare's visits to St. Mary's certain?

Mr. Garwood further assures us that there is nothing "bogus" about St. Mary's, and that the pilgrim can be sure that he is treading in the actual footsteps of Shakespeare. There was certainly nothing "bogus" about Wren's architecture of the now destroyed church in Aldermanbury. Wren and his colleagues created St. Mary's in 1677, 61 years after Shakespeare's death at Stratford. There may have been a church of St. Mary there before the Great Fire and Shakespeare may have worshipped there. But where are the proofs? IVOR BROWN

MR. STEPHEN MURRAY

SIR,—I should be very grateful if you could make it clear that the letter on the subject of the trial of Cardinal Mindszenty, signed by Stephen Murray and appearing in your issue of February 19, was by the barrister of that name and not by the actor. I am, through the medium of film publicity, rather more notorious, perhaps, than my eminent namesake, and I am not permitted, while under contract to a film company, to express my views in the Press on controversial subjects. It is not a question of dissociating myself from his views: I express no opinion upon them. STEPHEN MURRAY

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BOOKS IN GENERAL

EVENTS are well enough in their way; what historians write about them is much better. Who really cares about the later Roman Emperors, about Dutch William, or even about Pericles? These survive by grace of Gibbon, Macaulay, and Thucydides. The greatest figure of modern times made himself such by providing a myth which would provide endless fascination for historians. Napoleon knew the secret of survival: *quel roman que ma vie!* His own literary gifts were those of an amateur—characteristic of one who carried that second-rate tear-jerker, *The Sorrows of Werther*, in his hip-pocket; the Napoleonic legend would never have taken hold had it depended on Napoleon's own writings. Napoleon's great stroke was to provide raw material for works of genius, so that French historians wrote about Napoleon inevitably, as every Greek playwright interpreted the story of the Trojan wars. Of course there is always a certain amount to be discovered about Napoleon, as no doubt matter of archaeological interest can be found by grubbing in the ruins of Troy. But the profundities of the human spirit are to be found in what men have made of the legend, not in the archives and the rubble. The career of Napoleon is the greatest of modern legends.

This fact, once noticed, seems obvious and inescapable; and it is surprising that no one has had the idea long ago of discussing what French writers have made of Napoleon. To discover the obvious which no one else has thought of is the speciality of Professor Geyl,* one of the great historical minds of our time. It would be unfair to say that he demolishes the reputations of the great French historians; though he exposes their flaws, there remains, in his words "what life and energy, what creative power, what ingenuity, imagination and daring!" These words are a reminder of peculiar value for the English reader. Every Continental student of history, even if he be a German, knows that the French are the greatest practitioners of the art. English historians have never recovered from the fraud put over on us by Acton (or perhaps Carlyle) and still suppose that serious history—scientific history as it is called—was perfected in Germany. Eut what tawdry stuff the German historians are compared to the stars of Professor Geyl's book—and how long-winded!

Professor Geyl gives a plain analysis of what French historians have written about Napoleon from the Restoration to the present day. He starts with Chateaubriand and ends with Georges Lefebvre, who is still alive and in full possession of his powers. Each writer is summarised with the painstaking detachment with which a newspaper correspondent gives a summary of the foreign press. There are no graces of style, no novelty in the point of view; the general effect is humdrum, almost dull. It is like listening to a conversation where tones are never raised, where there is never a flicker of emphasis nor even, one supposes, of interest. As the conversation proceeds, it gradually becomes clear that Professor Geyl, far from being the club bore, declines to raise his voice simply because he is discussing the most profound topics of human experience. It is rare enough to find a work of history which is interesting, let alone exciting. This book is vastly more, an infinite consolation to the professional historian: it shows that history is a subject which can provoke thought. For my part, I would rather have written Professor Geyl's book than invented Existentialism or the new fashion in academic philosophy—what is it called? The subject, at any rate, which now spends its time debating whether it was once correct to describe itself as logical positivism. Professor Geyl's book enables the historian to look the philosopher in the face without cringing for quite a week.

His book teaches one, in the first place, a great deal about Napoleon. French historians have found in Napoleon infinite variety; and all of it was there. It is impossible to read this catalogue of their judgements without realising that Napoleon really was a most extraordinary man, probably the most extraordinary figure that has ever appeared in the world of politics. Sorel saw him as the man who devoted his life to the defence of the natural frontiers; Bourgeois as the man who lived only for the creation of a great Empire of the Middle East; Driault as the restorer of the Roman Empire in Europe, the greatest of the Caesars; Vandal even discovered in him the pacifier of the world—no wonder he spoke of "the ultimate justice and grandeur of his aim." The same variety and the same vastness are revealed in the descriptions of Napoleon's work as a civilian ruler—the heir of the Revolution, the restorer of order, the architect of the Code Napoleon, the founder of the French Empire, the protector of the Catholic Church. All these things happened in Napoleon's time; yet the cumulative effect of them is not to increase admiration for Napoleon, rather to rouse doubts.

Here Professor Geyl, as it were, turns the tables on Napoleon: for his book, despite its cool tone and its scholarship is an anti-Napoleonic tract, the most formidable ever composed. He has given the legend a good showing in order to show that it is a legend, that it over-reaches itself by its very absurdity. He quotes the rhetoric of Thiers, the brilliance of Vandal, the sophistication of Sorel; then brings them to earth with a gentle query—the murder of the Duke of Enghien? the breach of the Treaty of Amiens? the oppression and exploitation of Europe? the stifling of French liberalism? Above all, the lies, the intrigues, the dishonesty? Professor Geyl has no doubt of his own verdict:

> He was a conqueror with whom it was impossible to live; who could not help turning an ally into a vassal or at least interpreting the relationship to his own exclusive advantage; who decorated his lust of conquest with the fine-sounding phrases of progress and civilisation; and who at last, in the name of the whole of Europe, which was to look to him for order and peace presumed to brand England as the universal disturber and enemy.

This is not, however, only the verdict of a dispassionate Dutch observer. The historians of the legend do not exhaust French writings on Napoleon. Indeed, all Professor Geyl's criticism of the admirers of Napoleon is based on the work of French scholars; and his analysis of the two attitudes, *for* and *against*, is a splendid contribution to the study of French ideas. The cleavage is, in the first place, political. In England admiration for Napoleon has often (perhaps usually) been found on the "left"—a line running from Lady Holland to Hilaire Belloc and (dare I say it?) Bernard Shaw. The latest product of this school was the recent book by J. B. Morton on Brumaire, which presented Bonaparte as the man of the people. What English admirers of Napoleon have in common is simple: they are all "agin the government" and, since Napoleon was also against the British Government, they suppose that he was on their side. In France, however, the "establishment" has been on the left, especially in the time of the Third Republic; and Napoleon has been the hero of the Conservatives. They did not need to pretend that Napoleon cared for liberty: they were delighted that he had destroyed it and wished to follow his example. They echoed the phrase of Barrès: "Napoleon, Teacher of Energy," and praised, perhaps exaggerated, those qualities which made Napoleon the precursor of Fascism. Moreover, unlike English writers, they did not conceal that Napoleon was the enemy of England, not merely of the British Government; for, since England represented the principles of liberty, of constitutional government, and of agreement between the nations, she was their enemy also. This tradition, though strong, was the school of a minority in France. French writers who cared for liberty, who opposed militarism, had no illusions about Napoleon and exposed the errors of those who had. French liberals in the nineteenth century, and Socialists in the twentieth, stood unanimously for "the other France" which repudiated Napoleon with his gospel of energy and violence.

The cleavage *for* and *against*, as well as being political, is also professional; this is a point of peculiar interest fully worked out by Professor Geyl. The men of letters, with the exception of Taine, have been for Napoleon; the men of learning have been against him. The men of letters have often been distinguished scholars, as Vandal and Sorel were; but, in the last resort, they were concerned to produce an effect, to write a work of literary genius. It is a very different Napoleon who appears in the school textbooks. Indeed one is almost driven to postulate the general rule: the better written a book, the more unreliable as history. But there is more in it than that. Tocqueville said of Napoleon: "He was as great as a man can be without morality"; and the truth is that all men of letters, that is all who care for good writing, are, in this sense, immoral. They will always subordinate reality to effect and facts to phrases. Paine's judgement on Burke will serve for every French writer on Napoleon whose works one reads for pleasure: "He pities the plumage but forgets the dying bird." Nothing is stranger than the delusion of our time that men of letters are, by nature, champions of political, or even of intellectual liberty. If Professor Geyl's book is not evidence enough to the contrary, consider the famous writers who made the pilgrimage to Mussolini. Of course scientists are even worse—but then one hardly expects political sense from them. It was only when reading Professor Geyl's book that I realised that professors of history, at any rate in France, are so much better. Their record of integrity has been almost unbroken. Even in the Second Empire the committee of scholars, employed to publish the correspondence of Napoleon I, was too resolutely honest to please Napoleon III; it had to be replaced in 1864 by a committee of literary men (including Sainte-Beuve) which set out to publish only what Napoleon "would have made available to the public if he had wished to display himself and his system to posterity." Still, the achievement of the French professional historians cannot necessarily be counted to the general credit of the trade. What German historian stood out against the cult of Bismarck, at any rate until Bismarck had failed? And what chance is there that any German historian will stand out against the coming cult of Hitler? As for English historians, they have hardly escaped from the Anglican sycophancy which marked the Universities until the beginning of this century. Chaplains of the pirate ship, they have extolled the British Empire as persistently as the French men of letters extolled the Empire of Napoleon. The French Professors represented a general "university" culture which hardly exists outside France. As Professor Geyl says: "The scholarliness of their method . . . disciplines their mental attitude. But it would be foolish to overlook the fact that these authors come to Napoleon with their own, with different, *a priori* ideas, that they measure him against standards of spiritual freedom, of culture, of humanity, of social progress, that politically they are as a rule of the left. With some of them anti-clericalism is predominant, with others liberalism, or socialism". What a wonderful country of which these things can be said of University professors!

The last quotation is a reminder that Geyl's book, as well as being a book about Napoleon and about French historians, is about clerical values (using the word in Benda's sense). Geyl concludes his praise of the professional historian, Georges Lefebvre, in whom he finds the most convincing version of Napoleon with criticism: "I should like to see the eternal postulates of respect for the human personality, of the feeling for spiritual freedom, of lofty idealism, of truthfulness, taken into account when the final reckoning is made." This is a startling evocation of the shade of Acton; and it leaves me wondering whether the virtues of a historian and those of a "clerk" are the same after all.

A. J. P. TAYLOR

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* *Napoleon: For and Against.* By PIETER GEYL. *Cape.* 21s.

THE HEAT OF THE DAY

The Heat of the Day. By ELIZABETH BOWEN. *Cape.* 9*s.* 6*d.*

Of the character Harrison in her new novel Miss Bowen says: "One of his eyes either was or behaved as being just perceptibly higher than the other. This lag or inequality in his vision gave her the feeling of being looked at twice." There have been times when Miss Bowen's own vision as a novelist has seemed not unlike Harrison's, for it is her uniqueness that she is both a poet and a writer of social comedy. The combination is as uneasy as it is rare; and in *The Death of the Heart*, for instance, it gave rise to an inequality of vision which flawed seriously what is still in some respects Miss Bowen's most profound novel. The spectacle of the wretched Heccombs, extraverts as raw and unsubtle as the winds that swept across Romney Marsh against their house at Seale-on-Sea, seemed to inhibit the working of the poetic insight which distinguished her treatment of the Quaynes and of Eddie; the interlude at "Waikiki" was a most malicious and entertaining piece of social comedy, but it was so different in character from the rest of the book as quite to spoil its unity. It is the great and especial virtue of *The Heat of the Day* that everything in it is subordinated, to an extent greater than in her other novels, to Miss Bowen's sense of poetry. It retains triumphantly, for well over a hundred thousand words, the unity of mood and the single-mindedness of purpose which hitherto she has maintained only in short stories. In *The Heat of the Day*, as in the contents of *The Demon Lover*, Miss Bowen is more nearly akin to the symbolist poet than to the realistic novelist.

But to use the word poet of a novelist needs qualification and definition if the description is to have meaning. What seems to me the distinctive quality of Miss Bowen's fiction is that which, in Henry James, Mr. Spender has called "described poetry; and it is, I believe, Miss Bowen's great contribution to the novel that she has carried the use of "described poetry" further than it has ever been taken before, even by James himself. Let me quote an instance of what I mean. Miss Bowen's heroine and her lover are dining:

> But they were not alone, nor had they been from the start, from the start of love. Their time sat in the third place at their table. They were the creatures of history, whose coming together was of a nature possible in no other day—the day was inherent in the nature. Which must have been always true of lovers, if it had taken till now to be seen. The relation of people to one another is subject to the relation of each to time, to what is happening. If this has not been always felt—and as to that who is to know?—it has begun to be felt, irrevocably. On from now, every moment, with more and more of what has been "now" behind it, would be going on adding itself to the larger story. Could these two have loved each other better at a better time? At no other would they have been themselves: what had carried their world to its hour was in their bloodstreams. The more imperative the love, the deeper its draft on beings, till it has taken up all that ever went to their making, and according to what it draws on its nature is. In dwelling upon the constant for our reassurance, we forget that the loves in history have been agonisingly modern loves in their day. War at present worked as a thinning of the membrane between the this and the that, it was a becoming apparent—but then what else is love?

This passage is surely a lyric in reverse, as it were. With extreme brilliance, by analysis and amplification and the matching of ambiguities, it teases out the meaning of what is essentially a poetic idea. It would, one feels, ordinarily be expressed in poetic form, in a poem akin, perhaps, to that of Mr. MacNeice's which begins, "Time was away and somewhere else." It is a method which demands great powers of intuition into subtleties of feeling and the utmost precision in the use of language; and since its material is such as cannot ordinarily be captured in prose, it demands, too, an expression which is bound to use many of the devices of poetry. Almost inevitably, it leads Miss Bowen from time to time into a distortion of normal sentence-structure and word-order suggestive of a prose Hopkins.

But the passage is important not simply as an example of Miss Bowen's method; it also states the real subject-matter of the novel. "Their time sat in the third place at their table," and the time is 1940 to 1944, as London, the "intimate and loose little society of the garrison," saw it. Miss Bowen has always been uncannily sensitive to the relationship between human beings and the houses they live in and the seasons and landscapes about them. The surroundings of the characters in *The Heat of the Day* are the war-years in London, and with the atmosphere of the place and the time Miss Bowen is in almost mediumistic *rapport*. The novel is the most completely detailed and the most beautiful evocation of it that we have yet had or are ever likely to have. From the wonderful opening chapter describing a Sunday evening concert in the Regent's Park open-air theatre in the September twilight of 1942 right to the end of the book and the "scalded-cat" raids of February, 1944, we are immersed in wartime London as in a palpable, tangible medium like an element. Unerringly, exquisitely, Miss Bowen has caught the very feel of her period. The characters, too, live in the period as in an element, and some of them are not to be imagined outside it.

This is at once the novel's strength, and also the source of its weakness. The war has uprooted, dislocated them all; thus Miss Bowen's heroine, Stella Rodney, at the beginning of the book is living in someone's else's flat, surrounded by alien possessions—and how disconcerting that is for her will be appreciated by all who know Miss Bowen's earlier work—and at the end is living in yet another furnished flat. They are caught in the war as though in the glare of a powerful searchlight, but in the lives they have lived in the darkness outside the circle of light Miss Bowen is scarcely interested. Inasmuch as her intention is to show the subtle confusions that war brings, to show us war as a "quotidian nightmare," to use Mr. Henry Reed's admirable phrase, in which nothing and nobody are quite what they seem, this hardly matters. It enables her, too, to render romantic love with a greater poignancy than she has hitherto commanded, the romantic love of the early middle-aged.

Against this must be set the plot. When the novel opens, Stella is being persecuted by Harrison, an M.I.5 man, who wants her to become his mistress, and who uses his knowledge that her lover, Robert Kelway (an officer working in the War Office) is in communication with the enemy, to attempt to blackmail her into giving in to him. The suspense is admirably contrived; the telling of the novel is throughout masterly. And Harrison himself, though he remains shadowy, may be accepted as a symbol of the seedily ambiguous creatures that war throws up into positions of power. But Robert, in the end a self-confessed enemy agent, never convinces; or, rather, though he convinces as a lover, does not as a traitor. The family background Miss Bowen provides him with is probably the most perfect piece of social comedy that she has done, and it is kept severely in its place in the structure of the whole novel. It is a superbly funny study of a family dominated entirely by the lust to sell what it has at a profit, a family that has lived for years in a house that, from the moment when it was bought, has been up for sale. We are to infer that it is the insecurity of this background, of the business instinct run mad, which has moved Robert in his restless desire for order as Fascists

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conceive it. But Robert fails to convince because of his very normality, his rationality; there ought, one feels, to be a core of madness in him, but it is the other members of his family who are slightly cracked, not he. Here, it seems to me, post-war history has betrayed Miss Bowen. The traitor has become one of the great symbolic figures, possibly *the* great symbolic figure, of our time, and with every new instance of suspected treachery that the courts of the world bring to light, the fascination he exercises on us increases. This means, I think, that no traitor in fiction who is a subsidiary character only, as Robert is, and who fails to throw light on the psychology of his kind, can now be acceptable; and Robert is quite inadequately documented; his career as a traitor raises in the mind far more questions than his creator is inclined to answer.

Robert, then, is the fatal weakness in this brilliant novel. Indeed, his failure throws into all the more vivid relief Miss Bowen's success with her other characters; Stella herself, her son Roderick; Robert's mother and his sister Ernestine, the Platonic Idea, almost, of the ardent W.V.S. woman having a good war in a safe area; Stella's Irish cousin Francis; above all, the factory-worker Louie, of whom Miss Bowen says, "It was the blanks in Louie's vocabulary which operated inwardly on her soul"—and the blanks in her vocabulary are terrifyingly large. Miss Bowen has never created a truer or more pathetic character than this lost girl of wartime London, affecting in her dress and manner "a flying try at the Soviet comrade type," with her parents killed in a raid on Seale-on-Sea, and her husband, who provided her with a pattern to live by, a mould which she could fill, away in the Army. *The Heat of the Day* may not be a total success, but in it Miss Bowen has extended and deepened the scope of her own fiction.

WALTER ALLEN

GEORGE FOX

George Fox's Book of Miracles. By HENRY J. CADBURY. *Cambridge University Press.* 21*s.*

To found a durable religion and yet escape mythology is an extraordinary achievement. How is it done? Perhaps the simplest case of such an event is provided by the early Quakers and their first founder, George Fox.

The earliest Quakers, like the earliest Christians, differed from their successors not only by their superior saintliness and sufferings, but also by their extravagant behaviour and social radicalism. The sect which we now associate with opulency, benevolence and quietism burst upon Cromwell's England as a swarm of new and shocking fanatics, "a pest," "infectious as the plague," issuing, like so many calamities, from the wild counties of the North. Sometimes they disturbed church services with indecent exhibitionism, sometimes they claimed a blasphemous immunity from sin; and when James Naylor rode through Bristol in careful imitation of Christ, Cromwell's Independents, whom historians have defined as advocates of toleration, vied with each other in holy ferocity. Let his tongue be bored, cried a colonel; and his lips slit, added a major-general; let him be whipped, urged an alderman, from Westminster to the Old Exchange. Some would send him to Scilly, some to the Orkneys, others to Jamaica or the Isle of Dogs. "I shall speak no more," said a medical man; "but let us all stop our ears and stone him." Such were the passions aroused by the Quakers in 1656. The founder of the movement might condemn Naylor's deviation, saying that "James had run out into imaginations," but his own activities must have seemed to unfriendly critics almost equally eccentric. Sometimes he sat all day in hollow trees; he would call down the wrath of God, for no apparent reason, on "the bloody city of Lichfield," and "sound the day of the Lord" on a desolate hilltop in Lancashire; he would denounce humane learning, and unctuously chronicle (or imagine) the lingering diseases and sudden deaths of those who doubted his gospel.

Then, after the Restoration, all was changed: the Quakers shed their irregularities, and George Fox himself, by precept and example, curbed their now unfashionable demonstrations. They became respectable: the personality of Fox—that strange compulsive personality, which caused many to charge him with witchcraft, and a crowd of hostile undergraduates to make way for him at Cambridge crying, "Oh, he shines, he glisters!"—appears more luminous through the dissolving relics of his disorderly genius; and the second founder, his disciple William Penn, who had spent his youth not in hollow trees in Leicestershire but in the *beau monde* of Paris and the viceregal court of Dublin, opened the new era of Quakerism, as a religion which fashionable courtiers could respect and bluestocking peeresses embrace. Quakerism had changed its character. In its earliest form it had been not merely a religion or philosophy of life, it had been a form of social radicalism—the last, the least hopeful, and therefore the most mystical of those radical sects which had denounced society with its laws, its property-relations, and its protective learning, and had denounced them in vain. Now, with the Restoration, society had prevailed, and the other sects, which had staked all on their present radicalism, had collapsed with the revolution that had generated them. Quakerism, having deeper roots, could compromise with society, forget its revolutionary claims and their extravagant symbolism, and draw for its future development on an alternative source of power which society would not question: the gospel of personal religion, mutual help, and perfect simplicity.

This compromise with society had interesting consequences. When George Fox died, he left his *Journal* to be edited and published by authority of those "Second Day Morning Meetings" which had become the presiding censorship of the now cautious and regular movement. The result was Ellwood's edition of 1694, from which much evidence of unseemly enthusiasm, social challenge, or questionable egotism was omitted, and its significance concealed, until Norman Penney's great Cambridge edition of 1911 restored it from the original manuscript. Now, on a smaller scale, Dr. Cadbury has performed a similar service. Working in the Friends Library in London, he has discovered evidence of a hitherto unknown "Book of Miracles" by George Fox, and by the systematic use of a catalogue of 1695 has succeeded in reconstructing not indeed the text, but a skeleton of the text, which the second generation of Quakers, in their retreat from enthusiasm, had piously suppressed. The skeleton of a text is necessarily unreadable and few will attempt to read it; but in a long and scholarly introduction Dr. Cadbury has analysed the history and purpose of the lost book, and explained the early Quakers' desire to attest their spiritual authority by miraculous cures. The miracles themselves can often be reconstructed from collateral sources; but to laymen the interest of the book lies not in these details, which are anyway untrustworthy (for George Fox was a very unreliable narrator), but in the fact that the Quakers found it necessary to claim miracles in one generation and to conceal them in the next. Thus, by judiciously trimming the sails and lightening the load, do great spiritual movements contrive to navigate, from generation to generation, the rough seas of intellectual fashion and social change.

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THE NOLLEKENS BEQUEST

Nollekens and His Times. By J. T. SMITH. Edited by G. W. STONIER. *Turnstile Press.* 10*s.* 6*d.*

Professors of English Literature, whose interest, presumably, is to persuade people to read books, probably have no idea how frightening their language is to the ordinary individual. The very word "classic" strikes a chill into most hearts; it has such a compulsory sound about it. You cannot just read a "classic": you must read it, and like it—or forfeit your status as a civilised being. Fortunately "minor classics" offer an agreeable alternative. Unless you are preparing to pass an exam., or wish to preen yourself on the extent of your literary knowledge, you needn't read them at all.

Smith's *Nollekens* has long suffered the undeserved fate of a "minor classic." The inordinate praise of a few *cognoscenti* scares the ruck of the public away. Yet the book is far too fantastic and unbridled to warrant this neglect. The author was actuated entirely by malice—and such ignoble malice as must be read to be believed! As Mr. Stonier remarks in his judicious preface to this new edition: "No other biography owes so much to the feelings of the disappointed legatee." And to understand Smith and his motives better one must examine what shadow of a claim he had to benefit by Nollekens' will.

The history of the Nollekens bequest is as entertaining as that of Chantrey's, his fellow Academician. In 1778, when Joseph Nollekens was an R.A., doing a thriving business as a fashionable sculptor, Smith as a boy of 12 was taken into his studio to help with the casting and carving, and to stand on occasion as a model for Cupid. Three years later young Smith left to better himself, as a mezzotint-engraver. From that date until the death of Mrs. Nollekens in 1817 there is no evidence that Smith was anything but a most casual acquaintance of the family. At his wife's death Old Nolly, as a childless widower of eighty with a reputedly enormous fortune, became the butt of every legacy-hunter in London. The ups and downs of the cut-throat struggle that ensued for six years are revealed in Nollekens' will with its 14 codicils. Smith, who by this time was established as Keeper of the Prints at the British Museum, flung himself into the wolfish crew of sycophants; and managed at last to creep into the 13th codicil as an executor with "one hundred pounds for his trouble." Four months later death released the old man from his tormentors; the great legacy hunt was over: the supposed claims of Smith v. Nollekens dismissed with an enforced *nolle prosequi*. One hundred pounds! And the estate valued at over £200,000! *Nolle prosequi* indeed! The vindictive Smith fumed: he would give them *Nolly prosequi*! His Nolly should be prosecuted in his grave before the bar of posterity. That is how *Nollekens and His Times* came to be written.

For all his pent-up animosity Smith was an awkward writer, and would never have succeeded in pillorying Nollekens' peculiar habits, had not his victim given him every assistance. But Nolly was an eccentric; and an eccentric is a "natural" to any biographer for he reveals his character and emotions perpetually without a qualm before the most casual onlooker. The normal educated person, out of politeness, diffidence, vanity or cunning, interposes a veil between himself and his fellowmen to screen his true feelings; a shell, which a biographer has to crack with art and discretion to reach the kernel of character. But with a man like Nolly you only have to let him utter "and all who heard should see him there, and all should cry 'Beware, Beware.'" The eccentrics of this world are giving a running commentary on themselves all the time to anyone within hearing, as Boswell was the first to discover.

Smith supplemented his own first-hand knowledge with verbatim reports of Nolly and Mrs. Nolly, collected from other visitors to the house, the servants, the tradesmen, and indeed anybody with a ridiculous tale to tell of their cupidity and meanness. But this comprehensive zest for defamation, ironically enough, defeats its own intention. Nolly emerges from all the mudslinging, not as a miserly, squalid monster of ingratitude, but as a hardworking, pleasure-loving freak of a man, with some odd and admittedly not very endearing habits. While Smith reveals himself unwittingly as infinitely the more odious character by comparison. In Mrs. Nolly, it is true, no redeeming feature can be seen. She was a stupid woman, ashamed of her husband's low birth and bad spelling yet proud of his lucrative profession, torn between her stinginess and her desire to cut a dash in the fashionable world. As a confirmed miser, who loved the actual fingering of her gold, she must have gone through agonies, trying to climb the social ladder on the cheap.

But Nolly himself was no miser, in spite of the long list of his parsimonious habits, which Smith so diligently recorded—and one can be sure Smith never gave one of them a miss! He was a prize specimen of a *careful* man, notably over money, but also in the matter of coals, candles, clothes, cheese, coach-hire and all other consumable goods: the type of man who hates waste of any sort; who will always pick up a button lying in the road "in case it may come in useful," and wonder what the bystanders see to laugh at. On an appropriate occasion, however, he could be generous enough: he would always dip into his pocket to buy pictures or prints, to give half-crowns to the milkmaids on May Day, or to help a fellow-artist in distress. But these benefactions hardly gave pleasure to Smith who only appreciated liberality in the right quarter!

Although the part played by Nollekens naturally outshines the rest of the book, *His Times* fill in the background with a mixed bag of anecdotes concerning the literary and artistic figures of the period. Doctor Johnson, for instance, looms up time and time again; and his retort, when Nolly complained of his coming late to dinner,—"Bow-wow-wow!"—proves that he was not to be outdone by his host at the game of eccentricity.

Nollekens and His Times has long been out of print and hard to come by; for no owner of Nollekens is ready to part with him. This excellent new edition, with Mr. Stonier's glowing introduction, gives those who dread the "minor classics" another chance to overcome their misguided prejudice and take the plunge into "the most candid biography in the English language."

RALPH PARTRIDGE

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The Public Schools To-day. By J. F. WOLFENDEN. *University of London Press.* 4*s.* 6*d.*

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the feeling that the Public Schools have very little intention of adjusting themselves at all, but are to stand apart, like rocks in the flood of change. "There is just quantitatively so much more education in this country now than there has ever been before," writes Mr. Wolfenden, "that it has got rather out of hand. Everybody connected with it is so busy about the daily job that nobody has had time yet to sit back and think where it is all leading to." On the other hand the Public Schools have been in the field of education "for several centuries." "They were at it hundreds of years before the State took any part in education, before such things as local education authorities were born or thought of."

In a book which has been written for "the ordinary men and women who are interested in education, whether as parents, as members of education authorities, or as sharers in the common burden of rate-paying and tax-paying," such full-blown statements of half-truths will not do. In point of fact during the last few years there has been more hard thinking about the purposes of education than ever before in the history of this country. Again, it is a falsification of history to suggest, as Mr. Wolfenden does, in his book, that "for centuries" the Public Schools have been the nurseries of "gentlemen." That is a common misconception. Many of the schools now recognised as Public Schools were not founded until the nineteenth century, while even the oldest had little to be proud of in the centuries before that. In the eighteenth century the conditions in the best schools were such that many of the wealthier parents preferred to employ private tutors or send their sons on the Grand Tour.

Mr. Wolfenden lays himself open to criticism on another point as well. According to him the Public Schools "question" is a controversial one "of the kind which usually generates much more heat than light." For that reason he attempts the impossible: he tries to fillet out all the sociological and political—one might almost say, anthropological—implications of the Public School system. This is as though one were to write a treatise on Marx having decided to cut out all reference to the theory of "surplus value." For an essential characteristic of the Public Schools, in the accepted sense of the name, is "privilege." Throw the Public Schools open to all, and they cease to be Public Schools as we know them. This is not the opinion of one of the extremists to whom Mr. Wolfenden refers in his preface. It is the view of those very men who control the destinies of the Public Schools. For when the Fleming Committee was considering what proportion of the annual intake of the Independent and Direct Grant schools should come from the national system, the Public Schools argued that

> If the proportion of state entrants was increased much beyond twenty-five per cent, then the nature of the schools would change, and if it did, what each boy from the national system would be getting would be *pro tanto* less valuable.

When, therefore, the author sets aside social and political implications of that kind, he ceases to write about Public Schools as such and merely answers the question: does a boarding school provide a better way of bringing up a child than a day school does? On this topic Mr. Wolfenden has a great deal to say that has the validity of the commonplace. But even after he has separated the idea of residential education from the idea of the Public Schools, he argues from one to the other in a way that can only be called special pleading. Take his brief dismissal of one of the commonest criticisms of the Public Schools, that the single-sex community is at the least unnatural and that at the worst it provides "a direct encouragement of unwholesome affections." His answer to this is that it is not of the essence of a boarding school that it shall be a single-sex establishment, so any criticism based on this feature of many boarding schools ought not to be universalised. Surely if there ever was a piece of naive casuistry, this is it!

In his last chapter Mr. Wolfenden refers briefly to some recent experiments in boarding school education. It is true, as he says, that the experiences of camp schools and emergency boarding schools forced upon education authorities by the war made many people aware of advantages in boarding-school education to which they had previously been blind. These experiences, as much as anything else, have led to other experiments in boarding school education such as the short residential course for town-bred children in pleasant country surroundings. County Colleges, too, in rural areas at least, are bound to be residential, for the farmer or small employer cannot be expected to release his young worker for one day a week. So there obviously does lie ahead what Mr. Wolfenden calls "an era of exciting experiment in boarding school education," but again it is absolute nonsense to claim that "the Public Schools have been and will continue to be, the point of departure for all these experiments." What about the Danish Folk High Schools, to mention only one of many germinal experiments?

There is a good book to be written about the Public Schools, but this is certainly not it. How could it be? Take the Public School out of its social, economic and political framework and as a topic of discussion it just dissolves. This is not the case, alas, with the mists in this author's mind.

HUNTER DIACK

NEW NOVELS

The Oasis. By MARY MACCARTHY. *Horizon.* 25. 6d.

Black Rain. By SIMENON. *Routledge.* 9s. 6d.

The Squirrel Cage. By EDWIN GILBERT. *Heinemann.* 9s. 6d.

The winner of the Horizon competition, Mary MacCarthy, in her story *The Oasis* has tackled a big subject in a small space and achieved the necessary compression with wit and velocity. A party of 50 Americans, drawn from all ranks of educated life, sick of passively waiting around for the third world war, decide to "decentralise" on their own hook, and go off to form the colony "Utopia," on an American mountain top.

Two main parties soon form themselves within the group: the Purists and the Realists. The Purists, as far as I can see—for the consistency of this work is so rich that it is by no means easy to find one's way about—are idealists, people with hope, people bent on achieving a finer form of life than the one they left behind. The Realists' attitude is more escapist, they have no hopes of changing the way things are, but are merely looking forward to a serene holiday in this mountain colony "away from it all." They are hollow men, men with a basic spiritual laziness. We will not reveal the adventures of this community nor give away the plot, but will content ourselves with remarking that what is delightful about this story is the infectious energy and enthusiasm of Miss MacCarthy, who plunges gallantly in to the thick of so many complicated ideas and problems with a tonic species of rebarbative gusto.

There is a violence in this writer which is both exhilarating and amusing. She seems a little cruel though, sometimes, in the downright slanging of her own characters. Of one of them, Brown, for instance, she tells us roundly that he is "an ungainly aggrieved man full of insistences who imagines that his jokes are not understood."

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And of the Realists in general she explains, "the reality principle . . . remained the sole vindication of their otherwise miscalculated lives." One feels she has not really given them the opportunity to defend themselves! (Admittedly she is equally forthright on the praising side. The poet, Leo, "had the virtues of gravity and sweetness," and everything that Leo does seems to be approved of.) Perhaps one has got too accustomed to the current practice of authors allowing their characters' actions to speak for themselves. This is assuredly a prejudice. This story just does not happen to be that kind of a work. Here everything is formalised to a very high degree, the events drastically compressed, the characters viewed flatly, though subtly, in the manner of a Chinese painting, and the whole thing gleamingly bejewelled all over with the MacCarthy wit—which is very considerable. Miss MacCarthy's mind has what people are accustomed to calling a masculine width or range. She sees people in terms of moralities—both civic and personal. But it is even more her feeling for words and her talent for epigram which emerges at the end of the book as her particular gift.

And now stories by Simenon. Gone is the feeling of flat Chinese formalisation here! Replaced by the detailed, slow-moving, naturalistic reality of day-to-day existence. In *Black Rain*, the second story in the book, I must say that the bleak sobriety of the rainy little provincial town with its eternal smells of wet boots and leek soup, its monotonous jingle of harness in the cobbled streets, and its fabulous slowness of rhythm, is overpowering in all literalness. The murder, which should, of course, offset all this lengthy hum-a-drum, takes place in this case so very much off the scene! A man we hardly catch sight of at all has only dropped an anarchist bomb, in some other place anyway, and his drama is really not quite rewarding enough. Even with the horror of ogreish old Aunt Valerie thrown in. No, it is the first story in the book, the "Survivors," which is worth while. Here we get the Simenon landscape in its full strength once again. The interminable days, raw, grey, and almost raining, on, or round about, the quay. And the inimitable café scenes: "the air was steamy, clogged with smoke and brandy fumes. Waves of heat came from the stove and an icy draught swept the room whenever the door was opened." When people appear, it is almost more as something to be worked on by this atmosphere than anything else, one feels. They shiver in the draught, they have beads of atmospheric moisture on their clothes. They scratch their heads slowly in puzzlement. Someone says, "A bit queer, ain't it? I suppose he really killed the bloke?" Then the café crowd disengages itself from that particular scene, only to congregate again a little later on somewhere else, in some other grey place where it very soon begins to drizzle. But in this story the murder does see us safely through, presumably. It is the suspense, the manner of the telling that, of course, counts. But the murder itself, too, is satisfyingly gruesome. A man has been killed of whom it is an open secret that he drank the blood of another, still living man (and maybe even started to eat him) in a lifeboat, after a shipwreck. The question is, is it the victim's son, Pierre, who has killed this cannibal out of revenge?

In the last book on our list we move from the damp harbours of Normandy into the snap and crackle of Los Angeles. *The Squirrel Cage* is a hair-raising comedy of manners set in the script writer's building at the Millikan film studios, Los Angeles. The charm of this book is partly in the skilled and laughable character sketches, partly in our sense of being let in on the secrets of a fabulous institution, and partly in the story's construction, which resembles that of Greek tragedy, wherein the Victim is made plain to all eyes, except his own, at the rise of the curtain. Tony Willard, for years an unsuccessful New York writer, wrote one play that caught the eye of the Millikan studios and was, as a result, wafted off to Hollywood to make a script of it. And from the moment on page 4 when Tony, left alone in the splendour of his new office for the first time started reflecting, "Poverty had come to an end . . . it would be different now . . . he had grandeur on his hands . . . there would be gold in the bank," etc., we knew that somehow, somewhen, Hollywood would assuredly turn his triumph to ashes. The first warning came when his producer tipped him off as to Millikan policy, and told him: "We have to make certain changes (in the play) to get around the Code. We'll have to clean it up. Take all the love out of bed and play it in the open air, keep it on a spiritual plane. And cut out the stuff about the Church and no cracks about the Government and the heavy has to get punished." (Later on he had to help a director who was filming a Negro story—and was told to take out the Negroes.) Slowly but steadily everything crumbled. The girl Tony loved turned out to be a Millikan spy. The man he was co-operating with on the script of his play stole all his ideas and shouldered him out of the job altogether.

Edwin Gilbert shows us a life of schoolboy conventions, at once humdrum and barbarous, which, by its very lack of colour and imagination, appears grotesque. Whilst the place names (Venice Boulevard, Sunset Avenue, the Owl drugstore, Topanga Auto Court) and the language ("Please will you have with a capital C for Coffee with me?" "I mean it, baby. Truly do." "You talk like you are a bogey man. Are you a Russia lover?" etc.) spreads a pleasingly exotic perfume throughout this Hollywood jungle so red in tooth and claw. A most amusing satire.

JULIA STRACHEY

PIOUS PERJURY

A History of English Criminal Law and its Administration fro n 1750. By LEON RADZINOWICZ. *Ste ens* £3 10s.

No social history ever written has, I believe, attempted to do what Dr. Radzinowicz has done in this monumental book of 800 crowded pages. It is an account of the slow but decisive influence of public opinion on the development of criminal law in England, written, I should say, by a man who sees the criminal law of a country as the most vivid expression of its people's hankering after righteousness. The principles of the Common Law, according to Oliver Wendell Holmes, are the unconscious result of instinctive preferences and inarticulate convictions. The Judges, who regard themselves as merely the custodians but have in fact been the main authors of the Common Law, follow the movement of public opinion—usually a very long way behind. (The 1819 Royal Commission on Capital Punishment rudely told their lordships that it proposed to hear no evidence from them.) "So soon as public opinion is formed," wrote Buckle, "it can no longer be withstood." Who forms it?

Not the Judges, of course. Not the writers of the great legal essays. Not even the philosophers and teachers and poets. Public opinion has often seemed to be a self-generating force, incalculable and often ill-informed. American political observers have got themselves out of recent difficulties by calling it the "mystique" of a people; and the word must be comforting to those who know what it means. But in the simple, emotional content of the mass mind, still so far from political literacy, there is an ancestral capacity to judge of what is fair and equitable in the affairs of individuals; and in these matters the invention of the printing press began the

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THE BELSEN TRIAL
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With a Foreword by
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VISCOUNT JOWITT
Lord Chancellor of Great Britain
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enormous expansion of public awareness that today makes every human story public property. For my part, I should expect to find the springs of public opinion, especially the manifestation of it that moulds the criminal law, in the eternal struggling impulse towards an ideal Good, a process of surges and recessions in which it can appear, for a century at a time, that men are getting worse, but which shows a moral profit over a period of a thousand years. Consider this story of a prosecution under the eighteenth-century Shoplifting Act, told by Sir William Meredith in the House of Commons in 1777, and quoted by Dr. Radzinowicz in a footnote on page 475:

> It was at the time when press-warrants were issued, on the alarm about Falkland Islands. A woman's husband was pressed, their goods seized for some debt of his, and she, with two small children, turned into the streets begging. It is a circumstance not to be forgotten that she was very young (under 19) and most remarkably handsome. She went to a linen-draper's shop, took some coarse linen off the counter, and slipped it under her cloak. The shopman saw her, and she laid it down. For this she was hanged. Her defence was 'that she had lived in credit and wanted for nothing, till a press-gang came and stole her husband from her; but since then she had had no bed to lie on, nothing to give her children to eat, and they were almost naked. And perhaps she might have done something wrong, for she hardly knew what she did.' *The Parish Officers testified to the truth of this story*, but it seems that there had been a good deal of shoplifting about Ludgate. An example was thought necessary; and this woman was hanged for the comfort and satisfaction of some shopkeepers in Ludgate Street.

The story of our criminal law is, in fact, the story of the death penalty, and of the growing disgust of an increasingly articulate people with the savage ineptitude of the ruling class. This volume is therefore a history of capital punishment in England. Dr. Radzinowicz presents it as seen through the eyes of a host of contemporary critics in all classes of society. He shows with scholarly impartiality how every decrease in crime has been attributed to the death penalty, while every increase has been regarded as a reason for its retention; how the exercise of the prerogative of mercy and the "pious perjury" of humane juries have delayed the reform of the criminal law by providing an immediate mitigation of its severity; how this has evolved an irrational set of rules which, in the words of Sir William Holdsworth, have "stereotyped in the law a mass of captious and misplaced ingenuity." That mass of taboos and conventions is the law of evidence and procedure in criminal cases to-day, and the story of its growth is social history *par excellence*, a fascinating study for lawyer and layman alike.

One must risk a charge of ingratitude if one wants to get in a few legitimate grumbles. Apart from the price of this book, which is prohibitive and I should have thought difficult to justify, it is too discursive and therefore much too long. Tautology makes it about a pound too heavy (it weighs three and a half). And some of the things it says many times over have been said before by Stephen, Maitland, Pollock, C. K. Allen and others, who themselves are drawn upon to present identical conclusions in a host of admirable quotations. The last 250 pages, which contain the "capital statutes" of the eighteenth century, the extraordinary rules by which they were made to defeat the gallows, and a most interesting symposium of the views of foreign observers, are printed in seven-point type, which is fiercely trying to the eyes.

C. H. ROLPH

SOCIETY

The State and the Citizen. By J. D. MABBOTT. *Hutchinson. 7s. 6d.*

This book is good enough to make one wish it were better. To say this about a book on political philosophy—its subtitle is "An Introduction to Political Philosophy"—particularly if written by a university lecturer or professor, is a considerable compliment. Most such books are so bad, so full of empty pretentiousness and the smell of stale politics and mummied philosophy, that one cannot imagine them better; one can only wish they had never been written. The great merit of Mr. Mabbott's book is that he makes a brave and often successful effort to get down to realities in political theory and political practice and in the border line between them. He thinks clearly, intelligently, and honestly for three-quarters of his time, and he therefore makes the reader think—and think about the fundamental problems of the subject. What exactly Mr. Mabbott's subject is is rather doubtful. At one time it seems to be the general principles of politics, at another theories of political obligation, at another the much more limited question of the proper scope and limitation of state action. What he actually does is first to examine the political theory of Hobbes, Locke, Rousseau, and the Hegelians with that judicious blend of criticism and sympathy which discovers what each really intended to say and the kernel of eternal truth so often hidden in a mass of temporary and contemporary nonsense. He then proceeds to a general discussion of the limits of state action. Here his treatment of "values" and theories regarding the bases of freedom and authority is particularly good. In the third section of his book he edges from theory into practice and deals with the question what the state ought or ought not to do. Finally, he reverts to theory and the problem of the "general will" and the basis of state unity.

The order and construction of the book are somewhat confusing, and after reading it one is left with the memory of many instances of acute analysis and illuminating interpretation, but no very clear impression of the book as a whole or of a connected and consistent argument. The result was so disturbing to me that I thought the fault must be mine and so re-read the book—and with the same result. The re-reading confirmed my appreciation of Mr. Mabbott's merits as a stimulator of thought, but also of his defect. His defect consists in a curiously pedantic wrongheadedness. Let me give a significant example. He objects to the use of the words "society" and "community" and says that they should be "banished from our vocabulary," but, later on in his book, shows that they express a meaning for which some term is required, by himself using them. He objects to the use of the word society in the sense of a body of human beings in some kind of relationship on the ground that "it is clear that the whole human race is in no sense a 'society,' just as all red-haired men and all sufferers from rheumatism are not societies." But "human society" means something quite definite and possibly important, namely the body of human beings related to one another simply as human beings,

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